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IN MEMORIAM.

BY GEORGE P. MORRIS.

He died, as he had lived, beloved,
  Without an enemy on earth;
In word and deed he breathed and moved
  The soul of honor and of worth:
His hand was open as the day,
  His bearing high, his nature brave;
And, when from life he pass'd away,
  Our hearts went with him to the grave.

What desolation fill'd our home
  When death from us our treasure bore!—
Oh! for the better world to come
  Where we shall meet to part no more!
The hope of *that* sustains us now,
  In *that* we trust on bended knee,
While thus around his faded brow
  We twine the wreath of memory.

THE HIDDEN HAND.

BY EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "THE BRIDE OF AN EVENING," "THE DESERTED WIFE," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE HIDDEN HOUSE.

The very stains and fractures on the wall,
Assuming features solemn and terrific,
Hinted some tragedy of that old hall
Locked up in hieroglyphic!
Prophetic hints that filled the soul with dread;
But to one gloomy window pointing mostly,
The while some secret inspiration said,
That chamber is the ghostly! HOOD.

The Hidden House was a large, irregular edifice, of dark, red sandstone with its walls covered closely with the clinging ivy, that had been clipped away only from a few of the doors and windows, and its roof over-shadowed by the top branches of gigantic oaks and elms that clustered around and nearly concealed the building.

It might have been a long-forsaken house for any sign of human habitation that was to be seen about it. All was silent, solitary and gloomy.

As Capitola drew up her horse to gaze upon its sombre walls, she wondered which was the window at which the spectral light and ghostly face had been seen. She soon beleived that she had found it.

At the highest point of the building, immediately under the sharp angle of the roof, in the gable end nearest to view, was a solitary window. The ivy that clung tightly to the stone, covering every portion of the wall at this end, was clipped away from that high placed, dark and lonely window by which Capitola's eyes were strangely fascinated.

While thus she gazed in wonder, interest and curiosity, though without the least degree of superstitious dread, a vision flashed upon her sight, that sent the blood from her ruddy cheek to her brave heart, and shook the foundations of her unbelief!

For while she gazed, suddenly that dark window was illumined by a strange, unearthly light that streamed forth into the gloomy evening air, and touched with blue flame the quivering leaves of every tree in its brilliant line! In the midst of this lighted window appeared a white female face wild with woe! And then the face suddenly vanished and the light was swallowed up in darkness!

Capitola remaimed transfixed!

"Great Heaven!" she thought "can these things really be! Have the ghostly traditions of this world, truth in them at last?—When I heard this story of the haunted window I thought some one had surely imagined or invented it! Now I have seen for myself! but if I were to tell what I have seen not one in a hundred would believe me!"

While these startling thoughts disturbed her usual well balanced mind, a vivid flash of lightning, accompanied by a tremendous peal of thunder and a heavy fall of rain, roused her into renewed activity.

"Gyp, my boy, the storm is upon us sure enough! We shall catch it all around! get well drowned, beaten and buffetted here and well abused when we get home! Meantime, Gyp, which is the worst, the full fury of the tempest or the mysterious terrors of the haunted house!"

Another blinding flash of lightning, a stunning crash of thunder, a flood of rain and tornado of wind decided her.

"We'll take the haunted house, Gyp, my friend! That spectral lady of the lighted window looked rather in sorrow than in anger! and who knows but the ghosts may be hospitable? So gee up, Dobbin!" said Capitola, and urging her horse with one hand and holding on her cap with the other, she went on against wind and rain until she reached the front of the old house.

Not a creature was to be seen; every door and window was closely shut. Dismounting, Capitola led her horse under the shelter of a thickly leaved old oak tree, secured him, and then holding up her saturated skirt with one hand and holding on cap with the other, she went up some moldering stone steps to an old stone portico and seizing the heavy iron knocker of a great black oak double door, she knocked loudly enough to awaken all the mountain echos.

She waited a few minutes for an answer, but receiving none, she knocked again more loudly than before. Still there was no reply. And growing impatient, she seized the knocker with both hands and exerting all her strength, made the welkin ring again!

This brought a response. The door was unlocked and angrily jerked open, by a short, squarely formed, beetle-browed, stern looking woman, clothed in a black stuff gown and having a stiff muslin cap upon her head.

"Who are you? What do you want here?" harshly demanded this woman, whom Capitola instinctively recognized as Dorky Knight, the morose housekeeper of the Hidden House.

"Who am I? What do I want?—Old Nick fly away with you! its plain enough to be seen, who I am and what I want. I am a young woman, caught out in the storm, and I want shelter!" said Cap., indignantly. And her words were endorsed by a terrific burst of the tempest in lightning, thunder, wind and rain!

"Come in then and when you ask favors learn to keep a civil tongue in your head!" said the woman sternly, taking the guest by the hand and pulling her in, and shutting and locking the door.

"Favors! plague on you for a bearess! I asked no favor! Every storm-beaten traveller has a right to shelter under the first roof that offers, and none but a curmudgeon would think of calling it a *favor!* And as for keeping a civil tongue in my head, I'll do it when you set me the example!" said Cap.

"Who are you?" again demanded the woman.

"Oh, I see you are no Arabian in your notions of hospitality!—Those pagans entertain a guest without asking him a single question; and though he were their bitterest foe, they consider him while he rests beneath their tent, sacred from intrusion."

"That's because they *were* pagans!" said Dorky. "But as I am a Christian, I'd thank you to let me know who it is that I have received under *this* roof."

"My name," said our heroine impatiently "is Capitola Black! I live with my uncle, Major Warfield, at Hurricane Hall! And now, I should thank your ladyship to send some one to put away my horse, while you yourself accommodate me with dry clothes."

While our saucy little heroine spoke the whole aspect of the dark browed woman changed.

"Capitola—Capitola," she muttered, gazing earnestly upon the face of the unwelcome guest.

"Yes! Capitola! that is my name; you never heard anything against it, did you?"

For all answer the woman seized her hand, and while the lightning flashed, and the thunder rolled, and the wind and rain beat down, she drew her the whole length of the hall before a back window that overlooked the neglected garden, and regardless of the electric fluid that incessantly blazed upon them, she held her there and scrutinized her features.

"Well! I like this! upon my word, I do!" said Cap., composedly.

Without replying the strange woman seized her right hand, forcibly opened it, gazed upon the palm, and then flinging it back with a shudder, exclaimed—

"Capitola, what brought you under this roof? Away! Begone! Mount your horse and fly while there is yet time!"

"What! expose myself again to the storm? I won't, and that's flat!" said Cap.

"Girl! girl! there are worse dangers in the world than any to be feared from thunder, lightning, rain, or wind!"

"Very well, then, when I meet them, it will be time enough to deal with them! meanwhile the stormy night and my soaked clothing are very palpable evils, and as I see no good end to be gained by my longer enduring them, I will just beg you to stop sooth-saying—(as I have had enough of that from another old witch)—and be so good as to permit me to change my clothes!"

"It is madness! You shall not stay here!" cried the woman, in a harsh voice.

"And I tell you *I will!* You are not the head of the family, and I do not intend to be turned out by you!"

While she spoke, a servant crossed the hall, and the woman, whisking Capitola around until her back was turned, and her face concealed, went to speak to the new comer.

"When will your master be here?" Capitola heard her inquire.

"Not to-night; he saw the storm rising and did not wish to expose himself; he sent me on to say that he would not be here until morning; I was caught as you see! I am dripping wet," replied the man.

"Go, change your clothes at once, then, Davy."

"Who is that stranger?" asked the man, pointing to Capitola.

"Some young woman of the neighborhood, who has been caught out in the tempest. But you had better go and change your clothes than to stand here gossipping," said the woman, harshly.

"I say," said the man, "the young woman is a God-send to Miss Clara; nobody has been to see her yet; nobody ever visits this house unless they are driven to it; I don't wonder the colonel and our young master pass as much as ten months in the year away from home, spending all the summer at the watering places, and all the winter in New York or Washington!"

"Hold your tongue! what right have *you to* complain? You always attend them in their travels!"

"True; but you see for this last season, they have both been staying *here*, old master to watch the heiress, young master to court her, and as I have no interest in *that* game, I find the time hang heavy on my hands," complained the man.

"It will hang heavier if you take a long fit of illness by standing in wet clothes," muttered the woman.

"Why, so 'twill, missus! so here goes," assented the man, hurrying across the hall and passing out through the door opposite that by which he entered.

Dorcas returned to her guest.

Eyeing her closely for a while, she at length inquired—

"Capitola, how long have you lived at Hurricane Hall?"

"So long," replied Cap., "that you must have heard of me! I, at least, have often heard of Mother Dorkey Knight!"

"And heard no good of her!"

"Well, *no*, to be candid with you, I never did," said Cap.

"And much harm of her?" continued the woman, keeping her stern black eyes fixed upon those of her guest.

"Well, *yes*—since you ask me, I have heard pretty considerable harm!" answered Cap., nothing daunted.

"Where did you live before you came to Hurricane Hall?" asked Dorcas.

"Where I learned to fear God, to speak the truth, and to shame the devil!" replied Cap.

——"And to force yourself into people's houses against their will!"

"There you are again! I tell you that when I learn from the head of this household that I am unwelcome, then I will retreat, and not until then! And now I demand to be presented to the master."

"To Colonel Le Noir?"

"Yes."

"I cannot curse you with 'the curse of a granted prayer!' Colonel Le Noir is away."

"Why do you talk so strangely?" inquired Capitola.

"It is my whim. Perhaps my head is light."

"I should think it was, excessively so! Well—as the master of the house is away, be good enough to present me to the mistress!"

"What mistress? there is no mistress here!" replied Dorcas, looking around in strange trepidation.

"I mean the young lady, Colonel Le Noir's ward. In lieu of any other lady, *she*, I suppose, may be considered the mistress of the house!"

"Humph! well, young girl, as you are fully resolved to stand your ground, I suppose there is nothing to do but to put up with you!" said Dorcas.

"And put up my horse," added Cap.

"He shall be taken care of! But mind, you must depart early in the morning!" said Dorcas, sternly.

"Once more, and for the last, Mother Cerberus, I assure you I do not acknowledge your authority to dismiss me!" retorted Capitola; "so show me to the presence of your mistress!"

"Perverse, like all the rest! Follow me!" said the housekeeper, leading the way from the hall towards a back parlor.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE INMATE OF THE HIDDEN HOUSE.

There is a light around her brow,
  A holiness in those dark eyes,
That show, though wandering earthward now,
  Her spirit's home is in the skies. MOORE.

Pushing open the door, Dorcas Knight exclaimed—

"Here is a young lady, Miss Black, from Hurricane Hall, come to see you, Miss Day."

And having made this announcement, the woman retired and shut the door behind her.

And Capitola found herself in a large, dark, gloomy, wainscotted room, whose tall, narrow windows afforded but little light, and whose immense fire-place and blackened furniture seemed to belong to a past century.

The only occupant of this sombre apartment was a young girl, seated in pensive thought beside the central table. She was clothed in deep mourning, which only served to throw into fairer relief the beauty of her pearly skin, golden hair and violet eyes.

The vision of her mourning robes and melancholy beauty so deeply impressed Capitola, that, almost for the first time in her life, she hesitated, from a feeling of diffidence, and said, gently—

"Indeed, I fear that this is an unwarranted intrusion on my part, Miss Day."

"You are very welcome," replied the sweetest voice Capitola had ever heard, as the young girl arose and advanced to meet her. "But you have been exposed to the storm. Please come into my room and change your clothes," continued the young hostess, as she took Cap.'s hand and led her into an adjoining room.

The storm was still raging; but these apartments being in the central portion of the strong old house, were but little exposed to the sight or sound of its fury.

There was a lamp burning upon the mantlepiece, by the light of which the young girl furnished her visitor with dry clothing, and assisted her to change—saying as she did so—

"I think we are about the same size, and that my clothes will fit you; but I will not offer you mourning habiliments; you shall have this lilac silk."

"I am very sorry to see *you* in mourning," said Capitola, earnestly.

"It is for my father," replied Clara, very softly.

As they spoke, the eyes of the two young girls met. They were both good physiognomists and intuitive judges of character. Consequently in the full meeting of their eyes, they read, understood, and appreciated each other.

The pure, grave and gentle expression of Clara's countenance, touched the heart of Capitola.

The bright, frank, honest face of Cap., recommended her to Clara.

The very opposite traits of their equally truthful characters attracted them to each other.

Clara conducted her guest back into the wainscotted parlor, where a cheerful fire had been kindled to correct the dampness of the air. And here they sat down unmindful of the storm that came much subdued through the thickness of the walls. And, as young creatures, however tried and sorrowful, will do, they entered into a friendly chat. And before an hour had passed Capitola thought herself well repaid for her sufferings from the storm and the rebuff, in having formed the acquaintance of Clara Day.

She resolved, let Old Hurricane rage as he might, henceforth she would be a frequent visitor to the Hidden House.

And Clara, for her part, felt that in Capitola she had found a frank, spirited, faithful neighbor who might become an estimable friend.

While they were thus growing into each other's favor, the door opened and admitted a gentleman of tall and thin figure, and white and emaciated face, shaded by a luxuriant growth of glossy black hair and beard. He could not have been more than twenty-six, but prematurely broken by vice, he seemed forty years of age. He advanced, bowing, towards the young women.

As Capitola's eyes fell upon this new-comer, it required all her presence of mind and powers of self-control to prevent her from starting or otherwise betraying herself—for in this stranger she recognized *the very man who had stopped her upon her night ride!* She did, however, succeed in banishing from her face every expression of consciousness. And when Miss Day courteously presented him to her guest, saying merely—

"My cousin, Mr. Craven Le Noir, Miss Black."—Capitola arose and curtsied as composedly as if she had never set eyes upon his face before!

He, on his part, evidently remembered *her*, and sent one stealthy, keen and scrutinizing glance into her face; but finding that imperturbable, he bowed with stately politeness, and seemed satisfied that she had not identified him as her assailant.

Craven Le Noir drew his chair to the fire, seated himself, and entered into an easy conversation with Clara and her guest. Whenever he addressed Clara there was a deference and tenderness in his tone and glance that seemed very displeasing to the fair girl, who received all these delicate attentions with coldness and reserve. These things did not escape the notice of Capitola, who mentally concluded that Craven Le Noir was a lover of Clara Day, but a most unacceptable one.

When supper was announced, it was evidently hailed by Clara as a great relief. And after the meal was over, she arose and excused herself to her cousin, by saying that her guest, Miss Black, had been exposed to the storm, and was doubtless very much fatigued and that she would show her to her chamber.

Then taking a night lamp she invited Capitola to come, and conducted her to an old fashioned upper chamber, where a cheerful fire was burning on the hearth. Here the young girls sat down before the fire and improved their acquaintance by an hour's conversation. After which Clara arose, and saying—

"I sleep immediately below your room, Miss Black. If you should want anything, rap on the floor and I shall hear you and get up,—"

She wished her guest a good night's rest and retired from the room.

Cap. was disinclined to sleep; a strange superstitious feeling, which she could neither understand nor throw off, had fallen upon her spirits.

She took the night lamp in her hand and got up to examine her chamber. It was a large, dark, oak-pannelled room, with a dark carpet on the floor, and dark green curtains on the windows and the bedstead. Over the mantlepiece hung the portrait of a most beautiful black-haired and black-eyed girl of about fourteen years of age, but upon whose infantile brow fell the shadow of some fearful woe! There was something awful in the despair "on that face so young," that bound the gazer in an irresistible and most painful spell. And Capitola remained standing before it transfixed, until the striking of the hall clock aroused her from her enchantment. Wondering who the young creature could have been, what had been her history, and above all, what had been the nature of that fearful woe that darkened like a curse her angel brow, Capitola turned almost sorrowfully away, and began to prepare for bed.

She undressed, put on the delicate night-clothes Clara had provided for her use, said her evening prayers—*looked under the bed*—a precaution taken ever since the night upon which she had discovered the burglars,—and finding all right, she blew out her candle and lay down. She could not sleep—many persons of nervous or mercurial temperaments cannot do so the first night in a strange bed. Cap. was very mercurial, and the bed and room in which she lay were very strange; for the first time since she had had a home to call her own, she was unexpectedly staying all night away from her friends, and without their having any knowledge of her whereabouts; she was conjecturing, half in fear and half in fun, how Old Hurricane was taking her escapade, and what he would say to her in the morning! She was wondering to find herself in such an unforeseen position as that of a night-guest in the mysterious Hidden House—wondering whether this were the guest-chamber in which the ghost appeared to the officer, and these were the very curtains that the pale lady drew at night. While her thoughts were thus running over the whole range of circumstances around her singular position, sleep overtook Capitola, and speculation was lost in brighter visions.

How long she had slept and dreamed she did not know, when something gently awakened her. She opened her eyes calmly—to meet a vision that, brave as she was, nearly froze the blood in her warm veins!

Her chamber was illumined with an intense blue flame that lighted up every portion of the apartment with a radiance bright as day; and in the midst of this effulgence moved a figure clothed in white—a beautiful, pale, spectral woman, whose large, motionless black eyes deeply set in her death-like face, and whose long, unbound black hair, fallen upon her white raiment, were the only marks of color about her marble form.

Paralyzed with wonder, Capitola watched this figure as it glided about the chamber. The apparition approached the dressing-table, seemed to take something thence, and then gliding towards the bed—to Capitola's inexpressible horror—drew back the curtains and bent down and gazed upon her! Capitola had no power to scream, to move, or to avert her gaze from those awful eyes that met her own, until at length, as the spectral head bent lower, she felt the pressure of a pair of icy lips upon her brow, and closed her eyes!

When she opened them again the vision had departed and the room was dark and quiet!

There was no more sleep for Capitola. She heard the clock strike four, and was pleased to find that it was so near day. Still the time seemed very long to her who lay there wondering, conjecturing and speculating on the strange adventure of the night.

When the sun arose, she left her restless bed, bathed her excited head, and proceeded to dress herself. When she had finished her toilet, with the exception of putting on her trinkets, she suddenly missed a ring that she prized more than she did all her possessions put together—it was a plain gold band, bearing on the inner side the inscription—*Capitola—Eugene*, and which she had been enjoined by her old nurse never to part from but with life. She had, in her days of destitution, suffered the extremes of cold and hunger—had been upon the very brink of death from starvation or freezing, but without ever dreaming of sacrificing her ring! And now for the first time it was missing! While she was still looking anxiously for the lost jewel, the door opened and Dorcas Knight entered the

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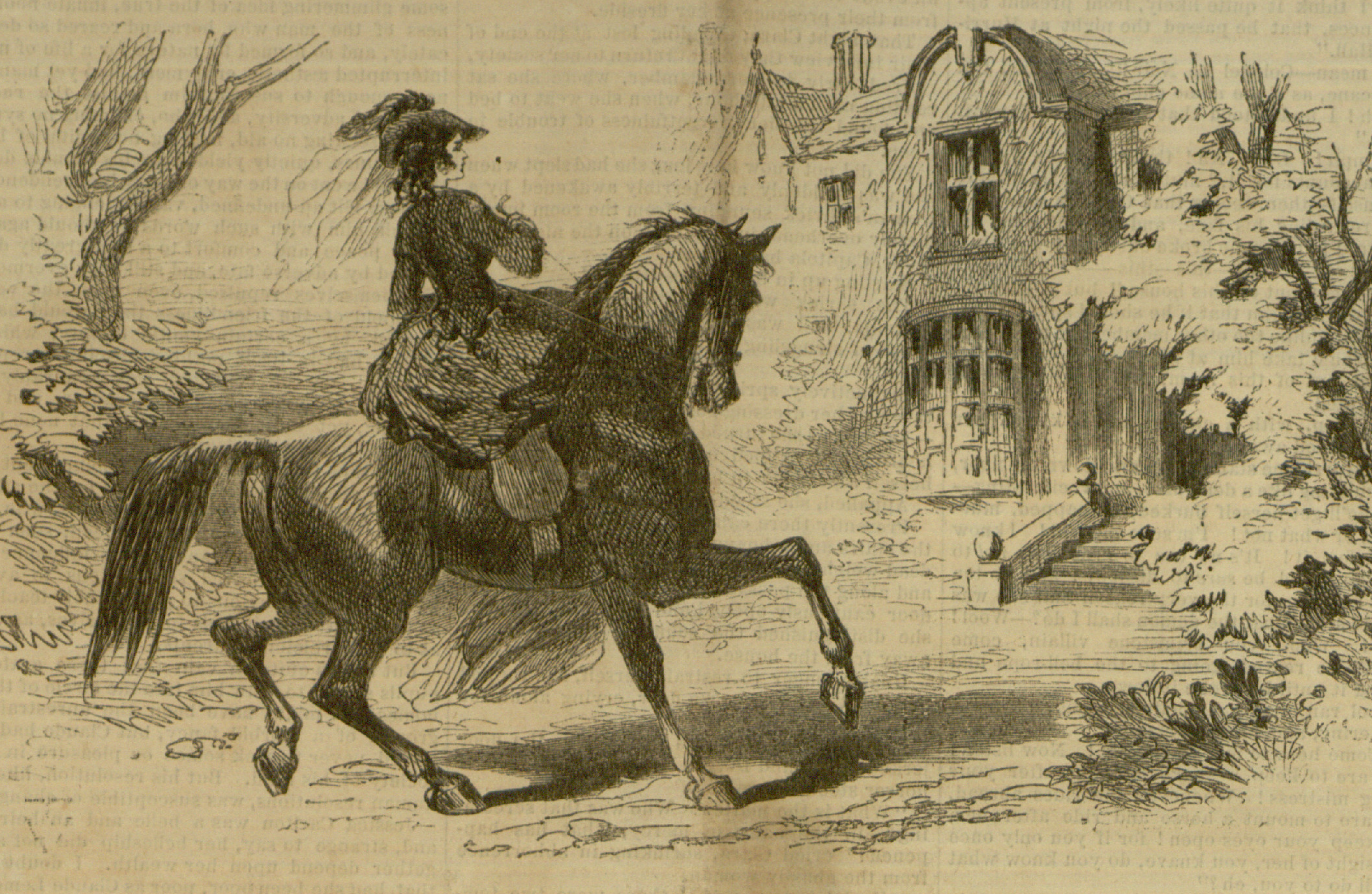

THE HIDDEN HOUSE.

room, bearing on her arm Capitola's riding dress, which had been well dried and ironed.

"Miss Capitola, here is your habit; you had better put it on at once, as I have ordered breakfast an hour sooner than usual, so that you may have an early start."

"Upon my word, you are very anxious to get rid of me; but not more so than I am to depart!" said Capitola, still pursuing her search.

"Your friends, who do not know where you are, must be very uneasy about you. But what are you looking for?"

"A ring, a plain gold circle, with my name and that of another inscribed on it, and which I would not lose for the world. I hung it on a pin on this pin-cushion last night before I went to bed, I would swear I did! and now it is missing," answered Cap., still pursuing her search.

"If you lost it in this room, it will certainly be found," said Dorcas Knight, putting down the habit and helping in the search.

"I am not so *sure* of that! There was some one in my room last night."

"Some one in your room!" exclaimed Dorcas in dismay.

"Yes! a dark-haired woman, all dressed in white!"

Dorcas Knight gave two or three angry grunts, and then harshly exclaimed—

"Nonsense! woman indeed! there is no such woman about the house! There are no females here except Miss Day, myself and you—not even a waiting-maid or cook!"

"Well," said Cap., "if it was not a woman it was a ghost, for I was wide awake, and I saw it with my own eyes!"

"Fudge! you've heard that foolish story of the haunted room, and you have dreamed the whole thing!"

"I tell you I didn't! I saw it! Don't I know?"

"I say you dreamed it! There is no such living woman here; and as for a ghost, *that* is all folly? And I *must* beg, Miss Black, that you will not distress Miss Day by telling her this strange dream of yours! She has never heard the ridiculous story of the haunted room, and as she lives here in solitude, I would not like her to hear of it."

"Oh, I will say nothing to disquiet Miss Day! But it was no *dream*. It was *real*, if there is any reality in this world!"

There was no more said. They continued to look for the ring, but in vain. Dorcas Knight, however, assured her guest that it should be found and returned, and that—breakfast waited. Whereupon Capitola went down to the parlor, where she found Clara awaiting her presence to give her a kindly greeting.

"Mr. Le Noir never gets up until very late, and so we do not wait for him," said Dorcas Knight, as she took her seat at the head of the table, and signed to the young girls to gather around it.

After breakfast, Capitola, promising to come again soon, and inviting Clara to return her visit, took leave of her entertainers and set out for home.

"Thank Heaven I have got her off in time and safety!" muttered Dorcas Knight, in triumph.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

CAP.'S RETURN.

> Must I give way and room for your rash choler?
> Shall I be frighted when a madman stares?
> Go show your slaves how choleric you are!
> And make your bondsmen tremble! I'll not blench!
> SHAKSPEARE.

It happened that about sunrise that morning Wool awoke in the cellar, and remembered that upon the night previous his master had commanded him to sally forth in the storm and seek his young mistress, and had forbidden him, on pain of broken bones, to return without bringing her safe. Therefore, what did the honest soul do but steal out to the stables, saddle and mount a horse, and ride back to the house just as Mrs. Condiment had come out into the poultry yard to get eggs for breakfast.

"Missus Compliment, ma'am, Ise been out all night in search of Miss Caterpillar, without finding of her! Is she come back, ma'am?"

"Lor! no indeed, Wool! I'm very anxious, and the major is taking on dreadful! But I hope she is safe in some house! But, poor Wool, *you* must have had a dreadful time out all night in the storm, looking for her!"

"Awful, Missus Compliment, ma'am, awful!" said Wool.

"Indeed, I know you had, my poor creature! Come in and get some warm breakfast!" said the kind old lady.

"I daren't, Missus Compliment. Old marse forbid me to show my face to him until I fotch Miss Caterpillar home safe," said Wool, turning his horse's head as if to go. In doing so, he saw Capitola gallopping towards the house, and with an exclamation of joy, pointed her out to the old lady, and rode on to meet her.

"Oh, Miss Caterpillar, I'se so glad I've found you! I'se done been out looking for you all night long!" exclaimed Wool, as he met her.

Capitola pulled up her horse, and surveyed the speaker with a comical expression, saying—

"'Been out all night, looking for me!' Well, I must say you seem in a fine state of preservation for a man who has been exposed to the storm all night. You have not a wet thread on you!"

"Lor, Miss, it rained till one o'clock, and then the wind riz and blowed till six, and blowed me dry," said Wool, as he sprang off his horse, and helped his young mistress to alight.

Then, instead of taking the beasts to the stable, he tied them to the tree, and hurried into the house and up stairs to his master's room, to apprise him of the return of the lost sheep, Capitola.

Old Hurricane was lying awake, tossing, groaning, and grumbling with anxiety.

On seeing Wool enter, he deliberately raised up and seized a heavy iron candlestick, and held it ready to hurl at the head of that worthy, whom he thus addressed—

"Ah, you have come, you atrocious villain! You know the conditions. If you have dared to show your face without bringing your young mistress——"

"Please, Marse, I wur out looking for her all night!"

"Have you brought her?" thundered Old Hurricane, rising up.

"Please, marse, yes, sir! I done found her and brought her home safe.

"Send her up to me!" said Old Hurricane, sinking back with a sigh of infinite relief.

Wool flew to do his bidding.

In five minutes Capitola entered her uncle's chamber.

Now Old Hurricane had spent a night of almost intolerable anxiety upon his favorite's account, bewailing her danger and praying for her safety; but no sooner did he see her enter his chamber safe, and sound, and smiling, than indignation quite mastered him, and jumping out of the bed in his nightgown, he made a dash straight at Capitola!

Now, had Capitola run, there is little doubt but that, in the blindness of his fury, he would have caught and beat her then and there! But Cap. saw him coming, drew up her tiny form, folded her arms, and looked him directly in the face.

This stopped him, but like a mettlesome old horse, suddenly pulled up in full career, he stamped, and reared, and plunged with fury, and foamed, and spluttered, and stuttered before he could get words out!

"What do you mean, you vixen, by standing there and popping your great grey eyes out at me? Are you going to bite, you tigress? What do you mean by facing me at all?" he roared, shaking his fist within an inch of Capitola's little pug nose.

"I am here because you sent for me, sir," was Cap.'s unanswerable rejoinder.

"'Here because I sent for you!' humph! humph! humph! and come dancing and smiling into my room as if you had not kept me awake all the live-long night—yes! driven me within one inch of a brain fever! Not that I cared for you, you limb of Old Nick! not that I cared for you, except to wish with all my heart and soul that something or other had happened to you, you vagrant! Where did you spend the night, you lunatic?"

"At the old Hidden House, where I went to make a call on my new neighbor, Miss Day, and where I was caught in the storm!"

"I wish to heaven you had been caught in a man-trap and had all your limbs broken, you—you—you—OH!" ejaculated Old Hurricane, turning short and trotting up and down the room. Presently he stopped before Capitola, and rapping his cane down upon the floor, demanded—

"WHO did you see at that accursed place, you—you—you infatuated maniac?"

"Miss Day, Mr. Le Noir, Mrs. Knight, and a man-servant—name unknown," coolly replied Cap.

"And the head demon, where was he?"

"Uncle, if by the head demon you mean Old Nick, I think it quite likely, from present appearances, that he passed the night at Hurricane Hall."

"I mean—Colonel Le Noir!" exclaimed Old Hurricane, as if the name choked him

"Oh! I understood that *he* had that day left home."

"Umph! Oh! Ah! that accounts for it! that accounts for it," muttered Old Hurricane to himself—then, seeing that Capitola was wistfully regarding his face, and attending to his muttered phrases, he broke out upon her with—

"Get out of this—this—this——" he meant to say "get out of this house," but a sure instinct warned him that if he should speak thus, Capitola, unlike the other members of his household, would take him at his word.

"Get out of this room, you vagabond!" he vociferated.

And Cap., with a curtsey and a kiss of her hand, danced away.

Old Hurricane stamped up and down the floor, gesticulating like a demoniac, and vociferating—

"She'll get herself burked, kidnapped, murdered, or what not! I'm sure she will! I know it! I feel it! It's no use to order her *not* to go; she would be *sure* to disobey! and go ten times as often, for the very reason that she was forbidden! What the demon shall I do?—Wool! Wool! Wool, you brimstone villain, come here!" he roared, going to the bell-rope and pulling it until he broke it down.

Wool ran in with his hair bristling, his teeth chattering, and his eyes starting.

"Come here to me, you varlet! Now listen: You are to keep a sharp look-out after your young mistress! Whenever she rides abroad, you are to mount a horse and ride after her, and keep your eyes open! for if you only once lose sight of her, you knave, do you know what I shall do to you, eh?"

"N—n—no, marse," stammered Wool, pale with apprehension.

"I should cut your eyelids off to improve your vision! Look to it, sir, for I shall keep my word! And now come and help me to dress!" concluded Old Hurricane.

Wool, with chattering teeth, shaking knees, and trembling fingers, assisted his master in his morning toilet, meditating the while whether it were not better to avoid impending dangers by running away.

And, in fact, between his master and his mistress, Wool had a hot time of it. The weather, after the storm had cleared the atmosphere, was delightful, and Cap. rode out that very day! Poor Wool kept his eyeballs metaphorically "skinned," for fear they should be treated literally so!—held his eyes wide open, lest Old Hurricane should keep his word, and make it impossible for him ever to shut them!

When Cap. stole out, mounted her horse and rode away, in five minutes from the moment of starting she heard a horse's hoofs behind her, and presently saw Wool gallop to her side.

At first Cap. bore this good-humoredly enough, only saying:

"Go home, Wool, I don't want you. I had much rather ride alone!"

To which the groom replied:

"It is ole marse's orders, Miss, as I should wait on you!"

Capitola's spirit rebelled against this; and suddenly turning upon her attendant, she indignantly exclaimed:

"Wool! I don't want you, sir! I insist upon being left alone! and I order you to go home, sir!"

Upon this Wool burst into tears and roared.

Much surprised, Capitola inquired of him what the matter was.

For some time, Wool could only reply by sobbing, but when he was able to articulate he blubbered forth:

"It's nuf to make anybody go put his head underneaf of a meat-ax, so it is!"

"What *is* the matter, Wool?" again inquired Capitola.

"How'd *you* like to have your eyelids cut off?" howled Wool, indignantly.

"*What!*" inquired Capitola.

"Yes, I axes how'd *you* like to have *your* eyelids cut off?—Case that's what ole marse t'reatens to do long o' *me*, if I don't follow arter you and keep you in sight!—And now you forbids of me to do it, and—and—and I'll go and put my neck right underneaf of a meat-ax!"

Now Capitola was really kind-hearted, and well knowing the despotic temper of her guardian, she pitied Wool, and after a little hesitation, she said:

"Wool, so your old master says if you don't keep your eyes on me, he'll cut your eyelids off?"

"Ye—ye—yes, Miss," sobbed Wool.

"Did he say if you didn't listen to me he'd cut your ears off?"

"N—n—no, Miss."

"Did he swear if you didn't talk to me he'd cut your tongue out?"

"N—n—no, Miss!

"Well, now, stop howling, and listen to me! Since at the peril of your eyelids you are obliged to keep me in sight, I give you leave to ride just within view of me; but no nearer, and you are never to let me see or hear you, if you can help it! for I like to be alone."

"I'll do anything in this world for peace, Miss Caterpillar," said poor Wool.

And upon this basis the affair was finally settled. And no doubt Capitola owed much of her personal safety to the fact that Wool kept his eyes open!

While these scenes were going on at Hurricane Hall, momentous events were taking place elsewhere, which require another chapter for their development.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

ANOTHER MYSTERY AT THE HIDDEN HOUSE

> "Hark! what a shriek was that of fear intense
> Of horror and amazement!
> What fearful struggle to the door and thence
> With mazy doubles to the grated casement!"

An hour after the departure of Capitola, Colonel Le Noir returned to the Hidden House, and learned from his man David, that upon the preceding evening, a young girl of whose name he was ignorant, had sought shelter from the storm and passed the night at the mansion.

Now Colonel Le Noir was extremely jealous of receiving strangers under his roof—never during his short stay at the Hidden House, going out into company, lest he should be obliged in return to entertain visitors. And when he learned that a strange girl had spent the night beneath his roof, he frowningly directed that Dorcas should be sent to him.

When his morose manager made her appearance, he harshly demanded the name of the young woman whom she had dared to receive beneath his roof.

Now, whether there is any truth in the theory of magnetism or not, it is certain that Dorcas Knight, stern, harsh, resolute woman that she was towards all others, became as submissive as a child, in the presence of Colonel Le Noir!

At his command she gave him all the information he required, not even withholding the fact of Capitola's strange story of having seen the apparition of the pale faced lady in her chamber, together with the subsequent discovery of the loss of her ring.

Colonel Le Noir sternly reprimanded his domestic manager for her neglect of his orders, and dismissed her from his presence.

The remainder of the day was passed by him in moody thought. That evening he summoned his son to a private conference in the parlor—an event that happily delivered poor Clara Day from their presence at her fireside.

That night Clara, dreading lest at the end of their interview they might return to her society, retired early to her chamber, where she sat reading until a late hour, when she went to bed and found transient forgetfulness of trouble in sleep.

She did not know how long she had slept when she was suddenly and terribly awakened by a woman's shriek sounding from the room immediately overhead, in which, upon the night previous, Capitola had slept.

Starting up in bed, Clara listened.

The shriek was repeated—prolonged and piercing, and was accompanied by a muffled sound of struggling that shook the ceiling overhead.

Instinctively springing from her bed, Clara threw on her dressing gown and flew to the door,—but just as she turned the latch to open it, she heard a bolt slipped on the outside and found herself a prisoner in her own chamber!

Appalled, she stood and listened.—

Presently there came a sound of footsteps on the stairs and a heavy muffled noise as of some dead weight being dragged down the staircase, and along the passage. Then she heard the hall door cautiously opened and shut. And finally she distinguished the sound of wheels rolling away from the house.

Unable longer to restrain herself, she rapped and beat upon her own door, crying aloud for deliverance.

Presently the bolt was withdrawn, the door jerked open, and Dorcas Knight, with a face of horror stood before her.

"What is the matter? Who was that screaming? In the name of mercy, what has happened?" cried Clara, shrinking in abhorrence from the ghastly woman.

"Hush! it is nothing! there were two tomcats screaming and fighting in the attic, and they fought all the way down stairs, rolling over and over each other! I've just turned them out," faltered the woman, shivering as with an ague fit.

"What—what was that—that went away in the carriage?" asked Clara, shuddering.

"The Colonel, gone to meet the early stage at Tip Top, to take him to Washington. He would have taken leave of you last night, but when he came to your parlor you had left it."

"But—but—*there is blood upon your hand, Dorcas Knight!*" cried Clara, shaking with horror.

"I—I know!—The cats scratched me as I put them out," stammered the stern woman, trembling almost as much as Clara herself.

These answers failed to satisfy the young girl who shrank in terror and loathing from that woman's presence, and sought the privacy of her own chamber, murmuring—

"What has happened? What has been done, oh, heaven! Oh, heaven, have mercy on us! some dreadful deed has been done in this house to-night!"

There was no more sleep for Clara. She heard the clock strike every hour from one to six in the morning, when she arose and dressed herself and went from her room, expecting to see upon the floor and walls, and upon the faces of the household, signs of some dreadful tragedy enacted upon the previous night.

But all things were as usual—the same dark, gloomy and neglected magnificence about the rooms and passages, the same reserved, sullen and silent aspect about the persons.

Dorcas Knight presided as usual at the head of the breakfast table, and Craven Le Noir at the foot. Clara sat in her accustomed seat at the side, midway between them.

Clara shuddered in taking her cup of coffee from the hand of Dorcas, and declined the wing of fowl that Craven Le Noir would have put upon her plate.

Not a word was said upon the subject of the mystery of the preceding night, until Craven Le Noir, without venturing to meet the eyes of the young girl, said—

"You look very pale, Clara!"

"Miss Day was frightened by the cats last night," said Dorcas.

Clara answered never a word. The ridiculous story essayed to be palmed off upon her credulity in explanation of the night's mystery, had not gained an instant's belief.

She knew that the cry that had startled her from sleep, had burst in strong agony from human lips!

That the helpless weight she had heard dragged down the stairs and along the whole length of the passage, was some dead or insensible human form!

That the blood she had seen upon the hand of Dorcas Knight was—oh, heaven, her mind shrank back appalled with horror, at the thought which she dared not entertain! She could only shudder, pray and trust in God.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

MILLIONAIRES' SONS.

Unquestionably it is, in most cases, a misfortune for a public man to have had an illustrious father. Great as his abilities may really be, and eminent as his own services should, of themselves, be considered, the public is sure to expect too much of him. Especially is this so, if his father has passed from the stage of action, and his name has taken its place amongst

> "The few—the immortal names
> That were not born to die."

Had Washington left a son, it would have been next to impossible for him to convince the world that his deeds, however eminent they might have been, were as worthy of its homage as those of his immortal sire.

But great is the misfortune, in public life, of having a distinguished father, especially to mediocre sons, there is a greater misfortune still, and it is to have a wealthy father—particularly one of the millionaire class. Without the necessary motives to exert themselves in any useful pursuit, and thereby develop their native, latent powers, the sons of millionaires too often fall into idle, effeminating habits, or worse.

SAVED BY LOVE.

A LIFE SKETCH.

BY MRS. MARY C. VAUGHAN.

Claude Lemoine, handsome in person, of proud descent, highly educated, and endowed by nature and long culture with an exquisite appreciation of all beauty, whether physical or moral, of a singular impressibility, and a sensitiveness not only to external but to the occult influences which we are wont to term spiritual, was unfortunately very poor.

I say unfortunately, because to one of his peculiar organization, so unfit for rude conflicts, so ill-prepared for harsh, living realities, for the contact with coarse nature, so keenly alive to slights and contumely, it was a real misfortune. To some men, on the contrary, poverty is just as real a blessing, because it develops latent powers, and rounds out the character as exercise, severe and long sustained, does the muscles that most require such treatment.

Some who saw Claude's pale, spiritual face, who looked upon the exquisite neatness of his poor attire, that neatness, and cleanliness of person, only the external sign of rare purity within, as he plodded daily to his post as teacher of the village school, would sneer at him, and call him milk-sop, or pauper-dandy, or some other equally opprobrious or contemptuous name.

But there were others who, in gazing, caught some glimmering idea of the true, innate nobleness of the man who, born and reared so delicately, and so formed by nature for a life of uninterrupted æsthetic enjoyment, had yet manliness enough to sustain him amidst the rude shocks of adversity, and who, claiming no sympathy, seeking no aid, making no capital of his misfortunes, quietly yielded to his humble destiny, and went on the way of lowly independence.

These felt an undefined, vague longing to approach him with such words as should again bring peace and comfort to a soul greatly distressed by adverse fate, and still they evermore felt themselves repulsed, even upon the very threshold of the friendliness they would have erected, by a certain gentle dignity, which, while it had in itself nothing absolutely repulsive, but, on the contrary, was admirably in harmony with the man's character, and so pleasing, yet built up a barrier that none had been inclined to overleap.

And thus for years Claude Lemoine went on his way absolutely friendless, save for the affectionate devotion of his scores of pupils, who, no matter how reckless they had been, soon became, under his wise and gentle influence, so steady and well-behaved, so solicitous to avoid wrong-doing, so anxious to please their teacher, as to be actually marvels to themselves, as well as to their rejoicing parents.

But it was quite in vain that these grateful pupils strove to draw him into the circle of their homes. It might have been the unrestrained growth of a morbid fancy, but Claude had resolved never to seek solace or pleasure in the society of his kind. But his resolution, like all human resolutions, was susceptible of change.

Jessica Carlton was a belle and an heiress, and, strange to say, her belleship did not altogether depend upon her wealth. I doubt not that, had she been poor, poor as Claude Lemoine himself, she still would have drawn about her a circle of respectful admirers, still would have been regarded as a choice acquisition to the society of her native place, although she might not have shone queen of a circle so brilliant.

In poverty she might have typified the sweet, lowly violet; in wealth she was the regal rose in the parterre of bright beauties amidst which she stood pre-eminent.

Jessica's beautiful face and gracefully-molded form were but the outward expression of the loveliness of her soul. Her gentle, tolerant judgment of others; her quiet, unobtrusive charities; her active, personal benevolence,—all were expressions of this soul-goodness, and made her beloved by scores whose hearts her splendid beauty never could have reached.

It was this lovely girl, in the early bloom of her beauty, in the first flush of her womanly triumph, who, turning aside from adulations that her sure instinct too often warned her were hollow, from love too timid in its utterance, too incoherent in expression from intense emotion, to be aught but honest and earnest, felt all the tender sympathies of her great, loving nature drawn out toward the handsome, silent recluse, Claude Lemoine.

She had never spoken to him. He never entered society, and into the charmed circle in which she moved he could not enter, wanting, as he did, the golden pass-key, even had not his fixed resolve prevented the attempt.

Daily Jessica saw him pass her door, walking slowly to and from the scene of his duties. Day by day she watched stealthily for his coming, impatient of all interruptions at the hours in which he passed, made happy if she saw him less sad in aspect than was his wont, and sorrowful if his pale, calm features wore a deeper impress of grief than was usual.

For years this silent watching went on; for years Jessica fed her heart on the chance sight of this man, who, all unknown to himself, was surrounded by such loving sympathy. At last chance brought them to acquaintanceship.

Jessica was a most fearless horse-woman, and often rode alone in the early summer mornings. Such perfect confidence had her friends in her power to restrain and guide her pretty, black Ethiop, that they, no more than herself, ever dreamed of danger.

But Ethiop was not always to be trusted, and Jessica's life came near being the forfeit of a sudden fright that sent him galloping madly along the still country road, through an open gate, across an intervening field, straight onward, with flying leaps, toward the high precipitous banks beneath which, and above the broad shelving rocks, the shallow waters of the lake crawled and plashed.

Claude Lemoine was walking on the bank of the lake, looking out over the still, blue waters which were just catching the early, golden sunrays that gleamed like topazes in the crest of every wave. From the deep absorption of this feast of beauty, he was aroused by the thunder of Ethiop's hoofs, as, with great bounds, he neared the dreadful precipice, his pale, beautiful rider clinging convulsively to his long mane that streamed out upon the morning air, and mingled its jetty hues with the brown ringlets of her loosened hair.

With Claude Lemoine to see this fearful danger was to seek to avert it. He sprang forward, made a clutch at the loosened bridle-rein, a vain clutch, for Ethiop swerved aside, but still bore his mistress right onward to imminent death.

His next attempt was more successful. He caught the fainting girl in his arms, when scarcely more than a dozen paces from the verge of the precipice, and the next moment, before, kneeling upon the ground, he had swept the ringlets from her face, the sound of hoofs suddenly ceased, there was a dull, heavy plunge a shrill cry of agony, and the gallant Ethiop lay mangled at the foot of that dizzy hight.

"Thank God!" was the fervent ejaculation that burst from Claude Lemoine's lips, as he heard the sound of that fall, and realized the fate from which he had rescued the beautiful girl who now lay like one dead in his arms.

Then he gently laid her down upon the dewy grass, and running along the bank to a point where the precipitous descent was broken by natural ledges of rock that formed rude but safe steps, he leaped down them, filled his hat with water, and climbing up again, was presently sprinkling that poor, pale face which turned upward to the sunlight, was still and expressionless as that of the dead.

Presently, however, a faint flush stole back to the cheeks, and then, with a deep, long sigh, the breath returned, and those soft, hazel eyes opened and fixed themselves with a vague gaze, that momently grew more distinct, upon his face.

"Where am I?" was the first question, as she struggled to free herself from his supporting arms; then with the very words returned a remembrance of the danger which had preceded her swoon, and, with a shudder, she fell back again, and closed her eyes as if to shut out some fearful vision.

Only for a moment did she yield to this fearful impression. Blushing deeply, she presently released herself from his arms, and by his aid rose to her feet.

Not a word had been spoken save her first involuntary question, but now Jessica, turning to her preserver, held out her hand.

"I owe you my life, Mr. Lemoine," she said, in soft, low accents, and her beautiful eyes filled with tears. "I have not words to thank you, but your own heart will answer for the depth of my gratitude."

"My service scarcely merits thanks, lady," answered Claude Lemoine; "it was but the common instinct of humanity that led to its performance."

Then, feeling that his words were ungracious, he hastened to add—

"I mean that I would have done the same for any human being, in such deadly peril, but to have preserved one like you, so precious as you must be to all who know you, makes me indeed most happy."

He bowed and was silent for a moment, then, seeing that Jessica's agitation caused her to tremble through all her slight figure, he offered her his arm, a little haughtily, and proposed, if she were able to walk, to assist her to the nearest house. He would fain have escaped entirely from her gratitude and its expression, but the instincts of a gentleman assured him that he must not leave her until she was placed under more suitable protection.

With slow steps the pair moved onward to the nearest house. At the door Claude Lemoine bowed and withdrew, before Jessica could repeat her thanks, and meeting one of his pupils on the village street, he dispatched him to Mrs. Carlton's, with tidings of Jessica's danger and escape, while he went home and shut himself in his room, in a tumult of unaccustomed thought and feeling, until the low clang of the bell summoned him to his daily duties.

Several days passed before Claude looked again upon the face of the lady he had rescued. Meanwhile message after message had been received from the proud Mrs. Carlton, from Jessica herself, reiterating the thanks they could never sufficiently express, and pressingly inviting him to their home.

Not till they found, from Claude's haughty answers, that all their attempts to lure him beneath their roof were vain, did the mother and daughter seek his lodgings to thank him in person.

When they returned home they carried him a captive in their train, and thus, much against his will, and haughtily, but unable to resist the spell of Jessica's sweet, grateful words, and the proud mother's tears of joy, Claude Lemoine, for the first time since his misfortunes fell upon him, found himself a guest beneath a hospitable roof.

And in the Carlton mansion he was thenceforth an honored guest.

The interest Jessica had long felt for him, intensified by her gratitude, soon deepened into love. And Claude Lemoine, once freed from the morbid fancies that had made him a recluse, again under the softening, humanizing influences of a home, and of good and gentle women, became happy, returned to his own long-buried better self, and at length, giving free play to the long-repressed emotions of his true heart, found himself acknowledging that there yet remained some charms in the life that for years had worn the hue of desolation.

Too timid and humble to comprehend the warm love displayed, all unconsciously, by Jessica, it was long before he dared to acknowledge to himself that she had won his solitary heart. And even then he remained silent, never dreaming, in his humility, that one so young and lovely, so richly endowed with wealth, and grace, and beauty, one whom all sought to please, and by common consent enthroned a queen over all hearts, could be won to share his poverty, and bless and gladden his desolate life.

I know not how the secret of their mutual love was revealed—a word, a touch, a glance will thrill the vital secret of such a love, through the whole united being of a pair to whom the sacrament of such an attachment has been given. But they were happy at last, and while Jessica, in the excess of her joy, went carolling her blithest lays from chamber to chamber of the great Carlton mansion, Claude Lemoine wept in the solitude of his own plain room, over the new, bright hopes that had so suddenly sprung up in the long-barren soil of his life. But his tears were tears of almost divine joy. He had so long stood apart from his kind, an infidel in his disbelief of human honor, or goodness, self-condemned to life-long isolation, that this new tie that linked him again to the great heart of humanity, lifted him as well to the pinnacle of a renewed faith in the human and the divine in manhood.

It was a blessed faith for him, not only for what it brought of joy in the society of his Jessica, soon his beloved wife, but that with his capacities for benevolence and usefulness enlarged with his now ample means, he became a blessing to society, and its grateful praise resulted to him in that highest bliss that links man with the angels.

And so, poor school-master no more, belle and heiress no more, but rich and happy man with a wide sphere of usefulness, and a beautiful, love-garlanded home; loving, beloved wife and mother, still retaining the power of moving regnant in the society she was so fitted to adorn, but from which she voluntarily withdrew herself, more and more, for the purer delights of home joys, good, honored, useful, surrounded by loving hearts, Claude Lemoine and his Jessica moved on the calm course of their united lives.

If Claude Lemoine had saved her life, imperilled by Ethiop's mad flight, she perchance had saved what was of far greater value—"a soul from death"—a rich, deep, true nature from the canker of distrust and pride, and the withering effects of human scorn, that had well nigh driven him into the dark abyss of hopeless atheism.

EXPERIENCE.

There is a pretty German story of a blind man, who, even under such a misfortune, was happy—happy in a wife whom he passionately loved; her voice was sweet and low, and he gave her credit for that beauty which (had he been a painter) was the object of his idolatry. A physician came, and curing the disease, restored the husband to sight, which he chiefly valued, as it would enable him to gaze on the lovely features of his wife. He looks, and sees a face hideous in ugliness! He is restored to sight, but his happiness is over. Is not this our history? Our cruel physician is Experience.

THE SAILOR AND HIS MOTHER.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

A woman by the wayside ask'd for alms,*
A poor, old woman.
As she stretch'd her hand,
Shrivell'd and bony, to receive the dole,
A smart, young sailor pass'd.
Quick from his pouch
Silver and gold he drew. "Take these," he said
"Oh, sir, you are too good—too good, indeed,
To me a stranger.—So it was with him
Who went to sea. Whate'er he had, he gave,—
My son, poor George, who went to sea and died."

Back came the man.
"Are you the one I sought?
Look at me, mother."
Then, a wildering cry
Burst from those aged lips, for well she knew,
Mid all the change of years, the dear, blue eye
That charm'd her waking from its cradle sleep,
Like violet bright with dew.
She would have fallen,
But the strong arm of her supporting son
Was round her thrown, and his caressing words
Assur'd her, as they sought their humble home,
To turn its squalid penury to joy.

Hartford, Conn., March 22d, 1859.

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* This incident took place in Philadelphia, at the corner of Fourth and Chestnut streets.

TRIFLING WITH A HEART.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

"Louisa, who was that gentleman that came home with you?"

"O—it was one of my friends."

"It was not Henry Southron?"

"No. It was not."

"But I thought Henry waited upon you to the party."

"So he did."

"And did he not remain until the close?"

"Yes—I believe so."

A cloud came over Mrs. Burnet's face, and she seemed troubled. She gazed upon her daughter for some moments without speaking further. Louisa was nineteen years of age; a bright-eyed, happy, merry-making girl, possessing a true and loving heart, but a little inclined to be thoughtless in her moments of social joy. She was an only child, and had been a pet in the family; but her love was not confined to the circle that met around her own hearthstone. More than a year before she had promised Henry Southron that she would be his wife as soon as time and circumstances rendered such a step proper. Henry was an orphan, and had just gone into business on his own account. He was a young man of whose friendship any sensible maiden might have been proud; a generous, upright, steady, industrious youth; fixed firmly in his moral course, and of a fair, manly personal appearance.

"My child," said the mother, after reflecting awhile, "what have you been doing? Why did not Henry come home with you?"

"Because he didn't choose to, I suppose," replied Louisa.

"That is not the reason," said Mrs. Burnet, with assurance. "Something that you have done has caused this. Now tell me what it is."

"You are too anxious altogether, mother. There is no damage done, I assure you."

"Still, my child, I should like to know what you have been doing."

"Well—I'll tell you," returned Louisa, giving herself a rock in her chair. "Henry is altogether too attentive. One would think, to see him at a party, that I was already his wife, and about the only female present."

"And you have become tired of so much attention?"

"Of course I have."

"And you have been throwing it off?"

"Yes. I took occasion this evening to show him that I didn't like quite so much overseeing. I talked with everybody else, and suffered Mr. Pingree to wait upon me down to supper. Poor Harry looked as though he had lost his last friend. It will give him a lesson, I guess; and in future I hope he will make a little less love in public."

"My child," said Mrs. Burnet, with much feeling, "you are trying a dangerous experiment. The time will come, if you ever marry with Henry Southron, when you will be proud of his undivided attention."

"It will be time enough for that when we are married," replied Louisa, with a toss of the head. "But don't give yourself any uneasiness. He will come around again all right."

"Did he offer to wait upon you home this evening?"

"No. He was rather shy of me after supper; and when the party broke up I ran off alone. Mr. Pingree overtook me on the way, and accompanied me to the door."

"I think, my child," remarked the mother, after another season of reflection, "that you have been not only very foolish, but, to a certain extent, wicked.—— Stop—listen to me. You know that Henry loves you most truly—that his whole soul is devoted to you—and that his attention is but the result of his affection—a demonstration of which you should be proud; for, let me tell you, an undivided, unswerving love is something not always to be secured. Now you have been trifling with Henry's heart—you have both pained and mortified him; and it so happens that those hearts which love the most strongly and deeply are the ones which suffer the most from slight or neglect, and which shrink the most quickly from coldness and trifling. Believe me, Louisa, you are entering upon dangerous ground. If you care for Harry's love, I advise you to ask his pardon as soon as you have opportunity."

"Ask his pardon!" repeated the thoughtless girl, with an expression of surprise. "Mercy on me! what are you thinking of? You shall see him at my knees before the week is out."

"Ah, my dear one, you don't know so much about the human heart as you think you do. A heart may revolve steadily around its centre of affection for a long time—for so long a time that it seems fixed in its course like a planet around its sun—but a sudden strain may snap the cord in sunder, and the stricken heart fly off in a tangent, and never come back. If you must trifle, trifle with anything rather than with the heart. We are going to Mr. Winthrop's to-morrow, and I hope I may induce Polly to tell you a little story of her experience in life."

Louisa said she should be very glad to hear it; then she tried to laugh; and then, having told her mother once more that she was needlessly anxious, she went to her chamber.

On the following morning Mrs. Burnet met her daughter as usual, making no allusion to the circumstances of the previous evening. In the afternoon they walked out to call at Mrs. Winthrop's, having had an urgent invitation to visit there. They remained to tea, and spent the evening.

Polly, of whom Mrs. Burnet had spoken, was Mr. Winthrop's sister. She was a maiden lady, past three-score, and had for many years found a home with her brother. Her head was now silvered, and time had drawn deep marks upon her brow, but still there were traces of beauty left upon her face. During the evening she came and took a seat by the side of Louisa, and after some commonplace remarks, the old lady said, in a quiet way—

"Your mother told me that you would like to hear a little of my life history."

"If you would please to tell it, I certainly should, for anything which you deem worthy of telling must be interesting," replied Louisa.

"Then let us walk in the garden. The moon is up, and the air is warm and pleasant."

They went out, and when they had reached the grapery they went into the arbor and sat down.

"There is no need that I should make any preliminary remarks," commenced Polly, "for I have come out on purpose to tell you a short story, and I shall tell it to you as plainly and simply as possible, and when I have done, you may know why your mother wished that you should hear it."

"When I was of your age people called me handsome; but still, with all my faults, I do not think I was ever proud or vain. I knew that I was good-looking, and I meant to be good. I tried to do right, as I understood it; and when I failed, it was from a lack of judgment, and a proneness to be thoughtless where I should have been directly the opposite. When I was eighteen years of age, George Ashmun asked me if I would be his wife. He was a noble-hearted, generous, upright man, and I never experienced a season of more blissful joy than when I became thus assured that his heart's best love was mine. I told him yes, and our vows were plighted. We were to wait a year, and then, if we continued to hold the same purpose, we were to be married. I don't know as any one envied me; but I do know that in all the country around there was not a better man than was he who loved me, nor was there one whose prospects in life were more promising.

"From my girlhood up I had been a sort of pet and favorite in our social circle, and considerable attention was shown me from all quarters. George was one of those honest-minded, practical men, who cannot appear different from what they really are, and who follow a true and just cause straightforwardly and frankly. When he had proposed for my hand, and I had promised to be his wife, he devoted his entire attention to me. It almost seemed as though he could not be devoted enough. In public, or in private, it was all the same. When out upon our social pic-nics and excursions he was constantly by my side, anticipating my every want, and ever ready to guard and assist me. I allowed myself to get tired of this; I allowed myself to feel that I would like a little more of my old liberty; I even went so far as to feel annoyed by his close, undivided attention. It was a thoughtless, reckless emotion on my part, but I was foolish enough to give it a place in my bosom. Some of my female friends joked me on the subject, and I finally determined that I would not be quite so closely tied to my lover. I did not stop to ask myself how I should feel if he were less attentive to me. I did not reflect that I might have been very unhappy had he bestowed his social favors upon others of my sex. In short, I did not reflect at all. I was only seized with a reckless determination to be a little more free and independent.

"We had a pic-nic in the grove near our village. I was buoyant and happy, and I laughed and chatted with all who came in my way. We had a dance before dinner, and George asked me if I intended to join in the amusement. I told him certainly. Then he took my hand, and said he would bear me company; but I broke from him with a laugh, telling him at the same time that I was engaged to dance with another. He was disappointed—I could see it at a glance—but he took it in good nature. Before the second dance he came again; but again I told him I was engaged. He betrayed no ill-feeling at all, only I could see the disappointment. In a little while I was among a company of laughing, joking, merry-making friends, of both sexes, who had been companions for years, and one of the gentlemen said I must go with him to dinner. I knew that George had made arrangements for me to take dinner with him; but what of that? Should I be tied to his skirts? No. I meant to be free,—and I told the man who had made the proposition that I would go with him. I must have been blind, as I know I was foolish and wicked; but I did not stop to think. When the dinner-hour arrived George came, with a happy, smiling, hopeful face, and offered me his arm.

"'For what?' said I. 'For dinner, my dear,' he replied. Then I told him I was engaged with another; and, before his very face, I took the proffered arm of the man to whom I had given my promise, remarking to my lover, as I tripped away, that he would have to find somebody else. I saw the look he gave me—a look of pain, of mortification, and of reproach—and as I called it to mind after I had reached the table I felt a little uneasy; but I said to myself—'He will come around all right,' and thus I tried to pass it off. Towards the latter part of the afternoon George came to me again. He asked me what I meant by my treatment of him. He was earnest and anxious. I told him he must not question me in that manner.

"'But,' he urged, 'only tell me if you mean *anything* by it.'

"'Yes,' said I, 'I do.'

"And he asked me what it was. I told him I meant to teach him a lesson.

"'A lesson of what?' he asked.

"'Of good manners,' said I. 'I want to teach you not to be too attentive to me.' And I added, very thoughtlessly,—'*you annoy me!*'

"He did not answer me. I saw his lip quiver, and his manly bosom heave; and, as he turned away, the sunbeams that came through the branches of the trees rested upon the big tears rolling down his cheeks. The impulse of my heart then was to spring forward and detain him; to ask his forgiveness, and make him happy. But a foolish, whimsical pride restrained me. I let him go, and tried to comfort myself with the reflection that it would come out all right.

"When the party was breaking up, he came and asked me if he should see me home. He was very cool, and seemed only to mean that he felt bound to make the offer, seeing that he had brought me there. I was not going to accept any such offer as that, and I told him I should not require his attention.

"'Polly,' he said, 'you do not mean this. Do not make me think that I have mistaken you!' He trembled as he spoke, and I could see that he was fearfully agitated.

"But I had gone too far to give up then; and with a light laugh I turned from him. I went home one way—he went home another. All the next day I looked for him, but he did not come. And a second day I watched. And a third—and a fourth. On the fifth day I received a letter from him. It was from a distant town whither he had gone to see his widowed mother. He wrote to me that he feared he had been disappointed. If I could trifle with his heart then I might do it again. He said he was going out West, and might be gone some time. If I still loved him when he returned I might be sure of finding him unmarried, for he had no heart to give another. Still he would like to hear from me—he would like to see me if I wished it. He wrote as one who had been deeply wronged, and there were one or two sentences in the missive that touched me unpleasantly. A week passed away, and I did not answer it; but at the end of that time I made up my mind to call George to me, and confess my fault; for well I knew that I had been very wrong. I wrote, and my letter reached its destination just twelve hours after he had started on his journey.

"I never saw George Ashmun again. In less than a year he died in a mad-house! * * * * * * * He did wrong—he did wrong—very, very wrong—to leave me as he did. He ought not to have done it. He ought to have made an effort—a greater effort—for his own sake and for mine. But—oh!—that could not make my crime the less. I had done a wicked thing—a cruel, thoughtless deed it was—and the penalty fell heavily upon me! * * *

"Louisa, your mother asked me to tell you my story. I have done so. If it can profit you, I shall not regret the pain I have felt in the recital. That I have not ceased to suffer let these hot, bitter tears bear witness. Oh! of all things within the sphere of your influence, beware how you trifle with a trusting, loving heart!"

Silent and thoughtful did Louisa Burnet return to the parlor; and but very little did she say on her way home. On the following morning she wrote a brief note, and sent it to Henry Southron. She simply asked him to come and see her. He came; and when they were alone she fell upon his bosom, and asked him to forgive her. She gazed up through her streaming tears, and begged for his love and confidence once more. Of course he could not refuse. Perhaps he was never happier than at that moment, for surely it must have been a mighty love and a true devotion that could have prompted the course the maiden had thus pursued.

Louisa never forgot the lesson she had received. She became Harry Southron's wife; and when, in after times, she saw husbands neglecting their wives, she had occasion to thank God that she was blessed with the true and undivided faith and devotion of her bosom companion.

Surely there is nothing on earth of more worth than a faithful, virtuous, and devoted life-partner; and he or she who can trifle with the heart of such an one only sows the seed which shall yield a harvest of pain and remorse.

TO AN OLD EAGLE.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

I.

You may sit on the mountain's mighty peak,
Where the soft winds sing or the rude storms shriek;
You may drink from the goblet of the cloud
When the bolt is hurled and the skies are bowed;
You may wheel in your pride, when the world's asleep,
Like a sentinel-soul o'er the star-lit Deep;
You may dip your wing where the deep tides run,
Or soar like the flash of a dream to the sun—
Shouting all the while to the Earth and Spheres,
"I have lived, I have lived for a hundred years!"

II.

But the fragile bird who has drooped his wing
To a leafy grave with the seventh spring,
May have thrilled as much in the morning beam,
May have drunk as deep of the Beautiful's stream,
As thou in thy flight of a hundred years
O'er the Mountain's peaks and the Valley's meres!
It is not by the length of life that we
Can measure the Beautiful's ministry:
O some souls can take in a single hour,
All a Century's light and joy and power!

A TRUE HISTORY
OF
THE COLONY OF NEW PLYMOUTH.

BY I. B.

A Descendant of Anne Bradstreet, commonly called the Tenth Muse, etc., etc.

BOOK II.—CHAPTER VII.

THE DOWNFALL OF MINE HOST OF MERRY MOVNT.

> "When states which are newly conquered have been accustomed to liberty, and to live under their own laws, there are three ways of maintaining them."—MACHIAVELLI.

The little democracy of Merry Mount was in its summer of enjoyment when the Plymouth expedition set forth against it. "Being resolved," so writes the Barrister, "to have the new name confirmed for a memorial to after ages, they did devise, amongst themselves, to have it performed in a solemn manner, with revels and merriment, and after the old English custom, prepared to set up a May-pole upon the festival day of Philip and Jacob; and therefore brewed a barrel of excellent beer, and provided a case of bottles to be spent with good cheer, for all comers of that day. And because they would have it in a complete form, they had prepared a song fitting to the time and present occasion. And upon May-day they brought the May-pole to the place appointed, with drums, guns, pistols and other fitting instruments for the purpose, and there erected it with the help of salvages that came thither of purpose to see the manner of our revels. A goodly pine tree of eighty feet long, was reared up, with a pair of buck-horns nailed on, somewhat near unto the top of it; where as it stood a fair sea-mark for directions how to find out the way to mine host of Merry Mount.

Little did these graceless gallants think for whom they had erected this "fair sea-mark," little did they dream that Captain Miles Standish, with his grim and grisly army, would be the first to find out the way to mine host of Merry Mount.

"And while our houses were building," continues this incorrigible Barrister, "I did endeavor to take a survey of the country; the more I looked, the more I liked it. When I had more seriously considered of the beauty of the place, with all her fair endowments, I did not think that in all the known world, it could be paralleled. For so many goodly groves of trees; dainty, fine, round, rising hillocks; delicate, fair, large plains; sweet, crystal fountains, and clear running streams, that twine in fine meanders through the meads, making so sweet a murmuring noise to hear as would even lull the senses with delight asleep; so pleasantly do they glide upon the pebble stones, jetting most jocundly where they do meet, and hand in hand run down to Neptune's court, to pay the yearly tribute which they do owe to him as sovereign lord of all the springs. Contained within the volume of the land, fowls in abundance, fish in multitude; and discovered besides, millions of turtle doves, on the green boughs, which sate picking of the full, ripe, pleasant grapes, that were supported by the lusty trees, whose fruitful load did cause their arms to bend, while here and there dispersed, you might see lilies, and of the Daphnean tree, which makes the land to me seem paradise, for in mine eyes it *was Nature's masterpiece, her chiefest magazine of all, where lies her store. If this land be not rich, then is the whole world poor!*"

It was towards the close of a summer day that mine host of Merry Mount, filled with these pleasing thoughts, was seated in the coolness of unlaced doublet and breeches, looking out from the open door of his summer-house, or bark-built tabernaculum, upon the sparkling waters of the Bay, and composing that famous chapter in his book, from which a kindred spirit, Samuel Butler, afterwards drew a pen-and-ink sketch, and his only one of New England, beginning with—

"Justice gives sentence many times,
On one man for another's crimes.
Our Brethren of New England use
Choice malefactors to excuse,
And hang the guiltless in their stead,
Of whom *the churches have less need.*"

The story was, that one of the Puritan colonists having been caught stealing corn from the Indians, (an old offence by the by,) was adjudged by the terms of a treaty, which had been established between the white men and the red, to be hanged for the offence. But it chanced that the culprit was a *cobbler*, whom, as the only one, they could ill spare, whereas there were *two weavers* in the colony, and one of them, by good luck, aged and sickly. So by a decision of the Council the latter was condemned to expiate the offence of the former, for said they, "insomuch as he is old and impotent, a sickly person that cannot escape death, his disease being confirmed upon him, we will put the young man's clothes upon him, this man, and let the sick person be hanged in the other's stead."

And here I must interrupt the course of my narrative, to glorify our forefathers for their wisdom and foresight. What is justice compared with policy? What difference, you will say, does it make to us, after a lapse of two hundred and several years, whether they hanged an old weaver or a young cobbler?

"Be slow to judge, and slower to despise."

For, trifling as the difference may seem, the hanging of the superfluous weaver established the balance of trade in Massachusetts. From the surviving brother of the shuttle arose the great industrial town of Lowell! And of the *young man* who so cleverly escaped the tow-thread, there is this account: that he reformed his habits, and waxing great in his profession, finally removed from the others, and founded the town of Lynn, which to this day is the center of the shoe trade of New England.

But to return. While our Barrister of Furnival's Inn was penning his delectable treatise, the measured tap of a drum, melancholy and monotonous, interrupted the stillness of the summer afternoon, not less intensely still because of the chance carol of a song-bird, or the ceaseless symphony of insects in the summer fields. Presently the rusty bandoleers of New Plymouth emerged from the forest, led by one of short stature, and equipped with sword, steel head-piece, and polished cuirass. These halting, the leader drew his trusty Damascus blade, and pointing with it at the gay streamers that fluttered from the summit of the May-pole, made a brief harangue, the which from the distance was unheard, and ordered, "forward, march!"

Whereupon the historian of the New Canaan calmly laid down his pen, and taking up another sort of weapon, said, "if mine eyes deceive me not, these should be the bully blades of New Plymouth, and yonder leader is Captain Shrimp! It behoves me to arm and prepare, for of him I have written!"

So, hastily calling together the few that were present in the settlement, he and his fellows gained the Town-House, which they barred and bolted against their rivals. But as the greater part of the dwellers of Merry Mount were scattered in the woods, idly dreaming over the select volumes of the poets, or pursuing the gentle craft of angling, there were but few fighting men in the Town-House—so much the better for the husband of Barbara!

Now, as the besiegers approach, let me conjure up all that is bloody, black and damnable. Let Indigestion, remorseless fiend, sheathe her pinions and sit upon my pen-shoulder! let Intolerance and Proscription inspire my soul with Hatred and Malevolence! Yea, let the incubus of Evil hatch its unhallowed offspring in my brain! for have we not here cooped up, sweet mirth and gentle humor, poetry and good-fellowship, which to strike down and exirpate forever from the soil of New England, was the foremost aim and object of our iron forefathers!

It was the intention of Captain Standish first to invite a conference, in imitation of the strategetic manœuvre by which he destroyed Wessagusset; but this hasty retreat and barricade utterly discomfited any hopes of demolishing Merry Mount by a similar course of argument and final *coup de main*.

However, in those days preliminary flourishes of language, plausible arguments for trespassing upon weaker neighbors, cloudy sophistries, concealing the nakedness of the design, were of little consequence. Our brave ancestors, as Sir Lucius O'Trigger relates, never inquired where the right lay. They just drew their broad swords and left the lazy sons of peace to settle the justice of it. Down came the warriors of New Plymouth, upon the first prospectors of planting arts and sciences in America! They broke through the doors of the original Athenæum; they drove the silly worshipers of the muses in a corner, and bound them hand and foot. There were some idle compromises at first, when steel crossed steel in conflict;—for the besieged, although of gentle blood, were not without some tough old Saxon characteristics, and not indisposed to maintain a quarrel to the last drop of blood. But insomuch as Captain Miles Standish promised fair dealing and ample indemnity for all losses, they finally yielded. So all the stock and gear, the corn, the wine, the oil of these adventurers became the lawful property of the victors, and enriched the Puritan metropolis of New Plymouth. The gentle Thomas Morton of Furnival's Inn was sent prisoner to England, strange and untoward as it may appear, under the care of John Oldham, the ci-devant rival of our gallant captain. "The harmless mirth," so writes our Barrister afterwards, "made by young men that lived in hope to have wives brought over to them, that would save them a labour to make a voyage to fetch any over, was much distasted of the precise separatists, that keep much ado about the tithe of mint and cummin, troubling their brains more than reason would require about things that are indifferent, and from that time sought occasion against my honest host of Ma-re-Mount, to overthrow his undertakings, and to destroy his plantations quite and clean."

As for restitution, that was never again thought of. Restitution, quotha? I warrant you, not to such graceless profligates! Presently from Salem came that pillar of piety, John Endicott, who dispersed the remnant of Merry Mount, cut down the Maypole, and changed the name of the place to Mount Dagon!

And now, before I lay aside my pen, let me indulge in a brief reflection. The pleasant gentleman and fluent philosopher, Nicolo Machiavelli, in the fifth chapter of his charming little book, entitled "The Prince," gives us a few plain directions, by which a strong government in the midst of weak neighbors can secure to itself tranquillity within and peace without its borders. The right of conquest is, of course, an axiom, understood. Then he continues:

"When States which are newly conquered have been accustomed to liberty, and to live under their own laws, there are three ways of maintaining them:

"The first is to ruin them.

"The second to inhabit them.

"The third to leave them in the enjoyment of their laws, but tributary," etc., etc.

The last method, after citing many notable examples of its inefficiency, he abandons in favor of the other two,—for as he says, "with states accustomed to the enjoyment of liberty, resentment is stronger and more active, the desire of vengeance more animated, the remembrance of their ancient liberty will not permit them to enjoy a single instant of repose, so that the surest means is—either to live among them, *or destroy them.*"

Now, insomuch as public opinion is strongly prejudiced against Machiavelli, I shall not venture to maintain his doctrines wholly. Yet I must subscribe to the wisdom of the *first* article, insomuch as it was the leading policy of our pilgrim fathers. Hang Justice, the bandaged-eyed baggage, with her swords, scales and scruples! Give me instead, the clear-eyed, smooth-faced Italian wench—Policy, with her black mask, her poisonous politics, and her stiletto! I warrant you my reader, you will kick at this and call it one of those fanciful metaphors in which New England writers commonly indulge. But let me ask you whether in all history you do not find the same—that policy, not justice, is ever the guiding star!

MRS. GRUNDY'S MISSION.

BY ANNA CORA RITCHIE.

It is a favorite theory of an eccentric speculator upon men and manners, that "all sorts of people" are needed to make up the social elements of a habitable and agreeable world—that the greater the variety of temperaments, customs, and opinions congregated upon the globe, the more likelihood there is of the arrival of that "good time" which Mackay has tunefully predicted as certainly "coming." Moreover, the moralizing individual, above mentioned, maintains that every man, woman, and child—though the man may be commonplace, the woman insignificant, the child *un enfant terrible*,—has, in that same pleasant world, his or her especial "mission." We use the much ridiculed expression very reluctantly, and with a painful consciousness that it has hopelessly fallen from its high position in the English vocabulary.

(If that editor of the Home Journal who has a speciality for word-coining, and who transplants exotics of speech into our Anglo-Saxon garden of language with such delicate dexterity that one is half-persuaded they are indigenous to the soil—if this poetic scholar will only *import* or *invent* an expression to honorably replace the disgraced and to-be-exiled "mission," it will be a literary benefaction.)

Upon reflection, we are inclined seriously to agree with the philosophic theorist who put forth the views, concerning the world's requisite occupants, which we have quoted.

The supernal powers, whose appointed office it is to constantly influence men's actions, must require an endless variety of media to effect the good works of which they are the invisible agents. Unlike temperaments must be acted upon in a dissimilar manner, and diverse instruments must be used to carve different materials.

If the rarest diamond be unskilfully polished, the brilliancy of which it is capable will not be called forth. The full lustre of the Koh-i-noor was only revealed after the labor of weeks and the use of a horse-power of vast strength to effect its cutting. There are brilliant minds whose highest sparkle can only be developed by an equally powerful, yet fine and laborious, process.

Wordsworth has given us an illustration of a wholly opposite class in the matter-of-fact Peter Bell. Peter, into whose heart nature could never find a way, although he "roved amid her vales and streams, green woods and hollow dells,"—Peter, who could not look "from nature up to nature's God"—who saw in the primrose by the river's brim a yellow primrose and "nothing more"—needed the shock of a dead man's ghastly face upturned to him in the clear stream, and the lesson taught by an ass' patient, loving watchfulness over his drowned master, to stir a pulse of his emotional nature, or lift his heart towards the Omnipotent who endowed that ass with its strange instinct of devotion.

Had not this poor ass a "mission" to perform for Peter? And had not Peter, after the awakening of his spirit through this humble medium, his "mission" to discharge among his hardened comrades?

We are apt to look at the odd, inharmonious, placeless individuals that float through the great stream of existence, and irreverently wonder why they were sent to occupy space in a world which they seem unfitted either to benefit or adorn, and where they are evidently not in the least at home. But, be sure, they all have their "mission." We may laugh at them—or turn our backs on them—or dread them because they invariably render the locality, which they inhabit, uncomfortable, but angel-hands are bending even these unshapely waifs into the performance of use.

Take for instance the much-abused, much-feared, ever-shunned, yet ubiquitous Mrs. Grundy. We admit that she is a very offensive, meddling person—that she is impertinently *clairvoyante* in discovering more of people's affairs than they know themselves—that she is a perfect Draco in crinolines for laying down cruel laws—that she creates most admired confusion by her interpretations of seemingly harmless actions—that she boldly startles young maidens with the news of their betrothal before the favored lover has spoken—that she unceremoniously lifts the cap from the smoothed locks of the unconsoled widow, and places a bridal chaplet in its place—that she frightens the miser with stories of his hoarded wealth, and confounds the prodigal entertainer with hints of his suspected poverty—that she publishes the charily concealed privations, and pinchings, and scrapings of the strugglers to "keep up appearances"—and makes known all the vanity, and ingratitude, and malice, envy and hatred that come within her ken, and doubles the actual amount;—in short, that she is a very indecorous and troublesome individual—yet even Mrs. Grundy has an unquestionable "mission."

Many a shrew softens down her shrill tones, lest they should reach Mrs. Grundy's quick ears. Many a husband puts a check upon unseemly inclinations from the fear that Mrs. Grundy should trumpet his lapses to the world. Many a youth and many a maiden, whose feet no reverence for God's commands could preserve from wandering in the "primrose path of dalliance," is frightened back into the beaten ways of safety and propriety by the dread of Mrs. Grundy's finger pointed at them—the shivering fear that seizes them at the thought of being arraigned before Mrs. Grundy's awful tribunal.

We are indebted to the continual *surveillance*, the invisible perambulations of Mrs. Grundy in our most secluded haunts, for the outside respectability of at least one-third of the community. There are consciences to which no avenues have ever been discovered, save the unseen pathway that Mrs. Grundy fearlessly treads.

Therefore are we impressed with the conviction that our theoretic friend has arrived at a wise conclusion—that it *does* take an incongruous medley of characters—minds—hearts—to make up a tolerably respectable world—that every man *has* his "mission"—that consequently Mrs. Grundy, with all her imperfections on her head, has been entrusted with one of the most important "missions," and that the garrulous old lady, who exerts such unbounded power in regulating the affairs of the universe, instead of being denounced and hunted out of "good society," ought to be canonized as a public benefactress.

DELICATE SATIRE.

"Do I understand the counsel for defendant," asked a very fat Western juror, "to say that he is about to read his authorites, as against the decision just pronounced from the bench?" "By no means," responded the counsel aforesaid. "I was merely going to show to your honor, by a brief passage I was about to read from the book, what an infernal old fool Blackstone must have been." "Ay, ay?" said the judge, not a little elated, and there the matter ended.

ENERGY.—The longer I live, the more certain I am that the great difference between men is energy—invincible determination—an honest purpose once fixed, and then death or victory. This quality will do anything that can be done in the world; and no talents, no circumstances, no opportunity, will make one man without it.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

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Don't Expect it.—We are constantly receiving letters from parties whom we highly esteem and would be glad to oblige, but whose communications we cannot answer without neglecting (and thereby doing injustice to) vital matters of business. We are so loaded with labors that every moment of our time has to carry double. In fact, more work is imposed on us than four men ought to do. Therefore, we have no doubt that our friends, on giving the subject due consideration, will see how impossible it is for us to act upon our friendly impulses and answer their letters. Don't expect it of us; and don't send us any manuscripts.

No Traveling Agents.—We employ no traveling agents. If any person acts as such he must be a swindler.

UNPLEASANT REPROACHES.

It is far from agreeable to give your enemies a chance to reproach you. The English journals are just now very clamorous in denouncing the corruption which pervades all departments of the public service in the United States. And they are using this charge as an argument against any increase of the popular element in the English government. "Here we see," they say, "what democratic institutions lead to. Honor and honesty disappear from the public service. Mere worth counts for nothing. Political influence controls everything. Men get office who can command votes,—how or by what agencies being a matter of no importance." And thus our alleged corruptions are turned against the cause of the people and our example is used to discourage and retard the progress of free, republican institutions.

This is far from pleasant. No one can read these diatribes and see the uses to which they are put without feeling ashamed that bad men should be allowed thus to bring the institutions of his country into disrepute and the cause of freedom into disgrace. Popular rights have enough to contend against without adding to their burdens. The oppressors of Europe have long kept the people crushed to the earth by brute force;—it is hard that the evils and defects of popular governments should be pressed into the service of tyranny, and their own friends thus in fact made to play the part of their worst foes.

But we must not rest content with complaining of this state of things or with scolding about it. We must *reform* it. The charges against us are exaggerated and put in the worst possible light, beyond all doubt;—but there is still truth enough in them to challenge our attention and awaken our anxiety. Party zeal does carry our people beyond the proper bounds. Party influence is too generally recognized as the only qualification for public office. The business of the country is put into the hands,—not of the men who are best qualified, mentally and morally, to perform it,—but into the hands of those who can bring most voters to the polls on election day. All parties sin alike in this respect. All look to party success as the great end to be accomplished, and to public patronage as the legitimate reward of party service. Foreign Missions, Cabinet seats, Post Offices, Custom Houses, Land Receiverships and all the other public offices in the gift of power are treated as means of rewarding those who have aided in elevating the successful candidates. The practice obtains under all our governments, federal, state and municipal,—is peculiar to no party and to no section, and involves the whole country in the most enormous and deplorable evil. In the first place, good men cannot be got in that way. The best men for public office—the men most thoroughly acquainted with the requirements of the public service and most conscientious and devoted in the performance of its duties, are never the most prominent or active in party contests. And besides this, the whole tone of the public service is lowered,—corruption creeps in to the administration of every branch of the government,—the worst men bear sway, the good and the upright are discouraged in their efforts to serve the country and the cause of freedom suffers obloquy and disaster everywhere.

This is manifest in the current history of Great Britain. A strong movement is in progress there to extend the suffrage,—to break up the small and corrupt borough-mongering system, and to admit the people to a greater share of political power. But it has been greatly damaged by the stories of our corruption and of the unhappy working of our democratic institutions. This is a calamity to the cause of liberty everywhere. The great mass of the people of England may be excluded from the enjoyment of their rights for twenty years, on account of the negligence of our people to protect the government from the stealthy advance of corruption.

It is the duty of *good men* everywhere to give their earnest attention to this subject and to accomplish the reform which is so greatly needed. They can do it, if they will. They have the power if they will only exercise it. Let them arouse the public mind to a sense of the disgrace which such conduct involves and the remedy will very speedily be applied. The English government a hundred years ago was far more corrupt than ours is now. Ministers did not hesitate to accept bribes from the agents of powers with which they were at war. Votes in Parliament were bought and sold with open and shameless venality. But the public sentiment of the country was aroused against it,—and a sense of *honor* was excited in the public heart which would blast forever any public man against whom such an accusation could be brought. The same thing can be done here, if the same class of men will take the same course, and they owe it to their country to enter at once upon the task.

"MAKE THE BEST OF IT."

A determination *to make the best of everything* is a wonderful smoother of the difficulties which beset us in our passage through this probationary scene. In Peter Pindar's story of the "Pilgrims and the Peas," two fellows upon whom the penance of walking to a certain shrine with peas in their shoes had been enjoined, are represented as having performed their tasks under very different circumstances and in very different moods. One of them, having taken the precaution to soften his peas by boiling them, tripped lightly and merrily over the ground; the other, who had not "gumption" enough to turn his hard pellets into a poultice by the same process, limped and howled all the way. It is pretty much the same in our pilgrimage through this "vale of tears." The impatient and imprudent travel on hard peas, the prudent and sagacious make themselves easy in their shoes, and run cheerfully the race that is set before them.

SENTIMENT AND SENSE

Spring is the jubilee of the Muses. Fancy has been scattering its praises from the "pictured urn" from time immemorial, and could all the odes that have been written to it be collected in one pile, it would overtop Parnassus. Hence it may be inferred that the theme is inexhaustible, and will continue to be harped upon "as long as grass grows and water runs." How indeed should it be otherwise, when the season overflows and sparkles with the natural elements of Poesy! The tender green, born of the smiles and tears of April; the wood flowers offering their sweet lips to the gentle kisses of May; the herbal odors, fresh and delicate as the vernal breath of Eden; the golden haze, half vapor and half sunshine, floating in the far horizon; the lambs capering in the meadows; the full streams chafing musically through their rocky channels; the song of the bobolink,

> "Poised on a bulrush tipsy with his weight;"

the exultant trill of the robin, perched on the purpling maple's topmost twig; the querulous note of the bluebird fluttering about the blossoming orchard, and a thousand other sights and sounds and etherial influences that stir the pulses of the soul, render the vernal season precious to all

> ——"Who in the love of nature
> Hold communion with her visible forms,"

and can appreciate her gentle ministerings.

But we do not all possess the "poetic temperament." The imaginative faculty has been scantly bestowed upon many worthy people, and even among those who have a fair share of it, its particular direction may depend, in some degree, on the sensuous peculiarities of the individual. The epicure, for instance, is by no means insensible to the charms of Spring, but the strong bond of sympathy which exists between his imagination and his epigastrium incapacitates him for regarding them from a poetic point of view. In the words of Byron—

> "He looks about him to the left and right
> With the prophetic eye of appetite."

The tender herbage is to him a glad token that the advent of spring butter, sweet and golden, is at hand, and that the saline scrapings of the firkin will soon cease to defile his morning roll. The curly-coated *herbivora*, skipping and bleating in the fields, suggest to his "mind's eye" delectable visions of roast lamb, and his fancy, making an excursion from the meadow to the kitchen garden, takes stock of the fragrant mint and the germinating peas which in due time shall add zest to the delicate hind quarter. The ideal faculty, stimulated by gastric influences, dishes up for him, perchance, an imaginary banquet. He draws a visionary blade through the bulbous side of an unreal leg of lamb, the gravy following the knife in blushing torrents, as the blood of Cæsar followed the weapon of Brutus. He scoops the delicious kidneys from beneath their vail of animal gauze, and lays them beside the prime slice on the warm plate; he establishes a small oasis of mint-sauce on the little desert of delf which he has reserved for the precious condiment, and then seizing the implements of appetite, prepares to devour. The vision never reaches beyond this point, for Fancy cannot humbug the palate of an epicure. His eyes and his olfactories she may cheat, but his shrewd sense of taste defies all jugglery.

So much for the mere epicure and his appreciation of the bounties of nature. But it does not therefore follow that a man of genius and poetic temperament should be indifferent as to what he eats and drinks. Heaven did not bestow upon us innumerable edible luxuries for bad cooks to spoil or intelligent people to despise. It was intended that we should appreciate and enjoy them. Had it been designed that we should merely "eat to live," one kind of food would have answered every purpose. The sense of taste would have been a superfluity. But it was given to us in wisdom, and, like every other faculty, to be educated and refined. The cultivation of his natural gifts is all, in fact, that distinguishes the civilized being from the savage. We therefore look upon the man who eats (like Mr. Pancks in Dickens's "Little Dorrit") as if he were "*coaling*," and to whom sustenance of all kinds is simply so much vital fuel, as little better than a barbarian. He treats with contumely the gifts of Providence, by saying in effect, they are beneath his notice.

Upon the whole, then, refined intelligence and the proper exercise of the higher sentiments are by no means incompatible with a due regard for good living. If Diogenes had dined three times a week with Alexander, it would have improved his temper and dulcified his philosophy.

WHICH SCREW IS LOOSE?

As an evidence of the difficulty of getting any business transacted at Washington with either of the Departments of Government, it is stated by a Washington paper that a gentleman visited one of them 35 times; sat waiting in the ante-room 260 hours, and walked between his hotel and the Department 51 miles before his business was disposed of, and when disposed of, his tavern bill had nearly absorbed the amount of the allowance, to say nothing of the loss of time and detention from the engagements of home.

This is only one of ten thousand proofs that our governmental machinery does not work quite well. All admit that. The question in dispute is, what is the cause of this effect?—for this effect defective comes by cause. Why, fellow-citizens, suppose one of you should attempt to conduct your private business on the principles upon which public business is conducted. Here is Jones, your head clerk. Jones has served you faithfully for four years, and begins to hope for a small increase of salary. Instead of complying with that natural desire, you say to Jones: "Jones, my boy, you have held your place so long, and become so well acquainted with its duties, that it is high time for you to retire; and the more, as Smith wants your place. Turn about is fair play. Why should *you* have a good place and Smith have none? True, you understand the duties of your office, and Smith does not. True, you are a gentleman and a man of honor, while Smith is a brawling blackguard. No matter—Smith is clamorous, and must come in!"

Is there a firm in the world that could be kept solvent six months if it behaved to its employees in that style? To get faithful service done, you must make the interest and the duty of the employee identical. He must know that so long as he does his duty, and no longer, he is safe in his place; and that promotion depends *solely* upon his showing himself fit for promotion. The shallowest pate on earth knows that this is true as applied to private business. Is it any less true as applied to public? Men of the right stamp, fellow-citizens, will not *accept* a position which does not afford a reasonable promise of permanence. Hence, your public offices are filled with men who have not the wit and the energy to achieve anything desirable in the private walks of life. You are served by the Refuse, when you might have the Pick.

Hence, too, any man who sets up for the presidency, or a governorship, or even for mayor or sheriff, if he has the slightest prospect of success, can have at command *a horde of creatures*, devoted to his elevation; because his elevation will be theirs also. At this moment there are nine individuals who *expect* to be the next President, and for each of the nine there is a small army of office-desirers at work; nearly all of whom are animated by the smallest motives of personal aggrandizement. One of the nine may get the place, whereupon he will fill the minor offices with the creatures who have done the dirty work of the campaign. Then we shall all fall to wondering how it is, that while the private business of the country is done with economy and vigor, the public business is conducted with bungling stupidity and lavish extravagance.

All this must be changed, and will be. But how? Well—*our* plan would be this: cut the difficulty into halves, and then tackle one half at a time. In other words, abolish, first of all, the national post-office, and throw open the business of carrying letters to private enterprise. That would extinguish more than half the offices at one glorious swoop. And such is the aptitude of the American people for business, that, in two years thereafter, we should have the best, the swiftest, and the cheapest letter-carrying system that ever existed. That done, it will be comparatively easy to limit the turning-out power of presidents and governors. The *turning-out power* is the point! No servant of the people should hold his place at the mercy of one man. We would put office-holders on a footing similar to that of officers of the army and navy: no removal except upon fair court-martial. This is an outline of our plan of reform. But whether this plan be wise or unwise, there is no doubt that the thing required is, to get the business of the people done on the principles and in the modes which give success to private enterprises.

Until this is done, no matter which party prevails, your government is slow, bungling and corrupt; your politics a mean scramble of mean men for place and pelf.

THE MORAL QUESTION OF THE DAY.

Is the ratio of crime to population on the increase in this country? The moral alarmists say it is. But can it be that with a peerless system of public instruction, free Bibles, free churches, a well-patronized clerical press, and swarms of earnest laborers in the religious and moral vineyards, we are actually gravitating the wrong way. *Facilis decensus averni*—it is easy sliding to perdition—and if the great social train is really on the downward track, the sooner we reverse the engine the better. As Shakspeare says, however, "there is much virtue in your *if*"—it opens the door for interrogation and argument. Now, we desire to know upon what grounds it is assumed, that the proportion of criminals to true men in these United States, is larger now than it was formerly. Ah! the alarmist refers us to the daily papers. Well, their running record of atrocities is, indubitably, somewhat startling. Nothing like it can be found in the files of fifty years ago. But it must be borne in mind that the facilities for detecting crime were then very meagre. There was nothing in the shape of a well-organized, professional police. The watchmen and constables of those days had no objection probably to arrest villains when they ran against them, but they had little skill in hunting them out. Justice neither wielded the lightning nor travelled by rail. Instead of having, as at present, more eyes than Argus, more arms than Briareus, she was comparatively blind and impotent. Hence the number of crimes *brought to light* bore necessarily, but a small proportion to the number of *crimes committed*. It is otherwise now. If grave offences sometimes go unwhipt of justice, they seldom escape publicity. The telegraph vibrates to every breath of suspicion. It tells not merely the truth and the whole truth, but sometimes a good deal more than the truth. Not a murder, forgery or suicide, or rumor thereof, escapes it. The reporters of the daily papers, too, are ever on the alert for the atrocious and the horrible, and the pencil and the burin are incessantly employed to illustrate, in the pictorial weeklies, the most revolting aspects of crime. Could we bring all these modern means of information, detection, recapitulation and illustration to bear upon the "good old times," they would probably yield a crop of criminal and criminating items large enough to keep this wicked age in countenance. We have a great respect for the past, but have no idea of canonizing it at the expense of the present.

OBITUARY FIBS.

The story of a good man's life, simply and truthfully related while the mold is yet fresh upon his grave, is one of the most instructive and impressive lessons which the press can present to the rising generation. If all the obituary notices published in the newspapers were of this class, editors might be forgiven if they omitted to censure with due rigor the misdeeds of departed scoundrels. But the mercy of silence is all which the utmost stretch of benevolence can righteously accord to the memories of the vicious. The Latin apothegm *de mortuus nil nisi bonum*—"Speak only good of the dead"—is in the highest degree mischievous as a social maxim. To gloss over, excuse or justify the crimes of bad men who have passed to their account, is treason to the living. We have too much of this *post-mortem* flattery. Death abates a nuisance—like a faithful scavenger removes a piece of moral putrefaction from our midst. But at the heels of Death comes the *literary embalmer*, intent on perfuming with the incense of compliment what the worms, if they were intelligent, would disdain to touch. The deceased is returned upon our hands transfigured, clothed in shining raiment, and surrounded with all the glories supposed to belong to the just made perfect. Too often the

> "Well-graced actor leaves the stage"

unhonored and unsung, while the exit of the rich and bloated sensualist is followed by a flourish of trumpets.

If the vicious and depraved are good for anything when dead, it is to "point a moral" not to "*adorn* a tale;" and should feelings of sympathy and respect for those they leave behind them forbid the press to paint them in their true colors, let it at least abstain from whitewashing their infamy. A false and flattering obituary notice of a hypocrite, a ruffian, orany other species of scoundrel, is the meanest thing a mean man can write.

BE AGREEABLE.

In journeying along the Road of Life, it is a wise thing to make our fellow-travellers our friends. The way, rough though it seem, may be pleasantly beguiled with an interchange of kindly offices and pleasant words. Suavity and forbearance are essential elements of good companionship, and no one need expect to pass pleasantly through life who does not *habitually* exercise them in his intercourse with his fellows. The Ishmaelite whose hand is against every man may die in a ditch without a finger being outstretched to save him. And why should we rudely jostle and shoulder our neighbors? why tread upon each other's toes? The Christian gentleman is always careful to avoid such collisions, for courtesy and loyalty to his race are a portion of his moral and religious creed; to be loved and honored of all, his highest earthly ambition. He seeks to turn away wrath with a soft answer, and if a brawler obstinately beset his path, he steps aside to avoid him, saying as "My Uncle Toby" said to the pertinacious fly, "Go thy ways; the world is wide enough for thee and me!"

There is another and meaner view of the subject, which we commend to the consideration of the worldly-wise and selfish. It always *pays to* be courteous, conciliating and mild of tongue.

THE CORONET OF TOIL.

The sweat-drop is the jewel in the coronet of toil. When man was driven from the Paradise-garden, it was declared to him that in the sweat of his brow he should eat his bread. If the history of ages is credible, that edict has never been annulled. Either from the corruption of man's primitive tastes, or the force of wants consequent upon the change, the earth, though mellow and generous to toil, has steadily refused to yield spontaneously the fruits of Eden. To satisfy hunger and thirst, to defend the body from heat and cold, and to shelter it from storm and danger, man has been compelled to tax an invention and exert powers, which his original simplicity might have avoided. God did not turn him from his earthly paradise without good provision for his new wants. Sterile as the unbroken turf seemed, it yielded to the stick and the iron; and when the dry seeds were cast into it, the rains, and dews, and sunshine, nourished them into plentiful harvests. But necessity—the ever-recurring calls of human want, which are as angel-infirmities—have allowed man no cessation from labor.

To live, to generate and fulfill a being "faded but not lost," he has been forced to toil from day to day, providentially permitted, in the average, to accumulate little beyond supplying immediate wants. In the perpetual summer of Eden nature supplied all things; out from that man came as a savage, without plan or capital beyond the capacity of his hands and the fruitfulness of the earth. Step by step he emerged from the dependence of ignorance and folly—he smote the forests—furrowed and drained the earth—reared his dwellings—while broad fields, filled with flocks and herds, and populous cities, crowned with domes and spires, rose before him, until he is now what we see—the genius of civilization, by toil mastering the elements to do his bidding.

Nor will man, on earth, ever be exempt from toil. All that is fair and noble in the great picture of his triumphs, has risen from the motion of active brains and hands. Garden and grain-field, cottage and palace, temple and monument, the shrines and altars whereon the highest faiths and holiest affections are consecrated, are the creation of toil—of toil which, in the wilderness, in the van of armies, and in the council-halls, not forgetting the glorious birth of man, has bowed to the expulsory edict of God. By sweat and in pain, the great, the true, and the heroic have wrought out their lives, and their brows bear the only coronet that sparkles with imperishable diamonds. Let no man scorn toil—toil, which Providence has dictated as the basis of our earth-life, and by which (to our understandings at least) the Supreme Being rolls and rules the universe in immensity.

THE BALL SEASON.

Not the ball season of hot saloons, late hours, and murderous suppers. Oh, no! Something *very* different from that. The ball season to which we refer is that which dots the village green with happy, eager boys, and makes Boston Common, Hoboken, the outskirts of Brooklyn, Philadelphia and Baltimore vocal with the shouts of contending cricketers, and of those who addict themselves to the livelier game of base-ball. The season for that has come round again. We hope it will be improved to the utmost, and not by boys alone. A good hearty game of ball, once a week, will harm no man. To many of our jaded fellow-citizens it would be life, health, and the glad renewal of their youth. Get the balls ready, then. Polish off the bats. Bring out the wickets. Call a meeting of the club. Make arrangements for getting the most out of these pleasant months that are coming. Run out, merchants, lawyers, clergymen, book-keepers, editors, authors, clerks, and everybody else who can, and have half a day of it in the fields every week during the ball season of 1859. Don't think it undignified. Gen. Washington hunted the fox every fine day of the hunting season. Chief-Justice Marshall was not absent from the annual festival of his Quoit Club for fifty-five years. Think of that, ye solemn dyspeptics!

N. B. No drinking, remember. The right sort of a ball club drink nothing but water, and allow nothing intoxicating to be brought on the ground. Drinking is death to good sport. Sam McLaughlin, the notorious sporting man, says the reason why he wins so many races is because *he never drinks gin!*

DEAD-HEADISM REVIVING.

Some of our editorial friends are sighing for the free railroad passes with which they used to be supplied, and attribute the falling off in the income of certain roads to the abolition of free rides. We think the suppression of the free-ticket system was a wise measure for all parties—best for the press, best for the railroads, best for the public. As a general rule, the editors who accept tickets feel bound to support the company that supplies them, right or wrong. The accounts of accidents are suppressed or misrepresented, for example. We are opposed to dead-headism in all its branches. We are opposed to it, because we desire to see the press of the United States powerful, independent and self-respecting. We should regard a return to the free-pass system as a calamity of no common magnitude. Every editor should oppose it from policy, if not from principle; because editors must know, if they reflect, that *no man pays so dearly for a thing as he who gets it for nothing!*

EYESIGHT.

How is it that poor eyesight is so universal? It was not so with our grandames and their hale partners. Are our furnace-heated, gas-lighted houses and late hours responsible for this? Old ladies *used* to be able to sew on fine cambric with one small oil-lamp; old men to read the newspaper long after their heads were snow-white. Now, our girls and boys wear eye-glasses, and their fathers have to *feel* their way through the world. Do coffee and tea affect the eyesight? Do small bonnets? Does tobacco-smoking? What is the matter with us all? and who can tell us where is the loose screw, which has unharmonized us? Who will throw light on the darkened eyeballs of this generation? And of what use are mental acquirements, if our bodies are to be mere wrecks?

ABOUT SUICIDE.

He who commits self-murder must, it seems to us, be either a madman or a coward. If a Christian, he must be mad—if an infidel, cowardly. In the former case, therefore, the suicide deserves our pity—in the latter, he merits our contempt. The infidel who has no belief in the Bible doctrine of future punishment, does not, in his own opinion, run any risk in sneaking out of existence by the back door of suicide. Lacking the manliness to face misfortune, he decamps from the world, leaving, perhaps, a helpless family to battle with the troubles from which he flees like a paltroon.

Solid and Showy.—Some of the most substantial and necessary acquirements are the least showy. In improving our own minds or teaching others, we must not estimate knowledge by its availability for the purposes of ostentation. That sensible old Roman, Quintilian, remarks: "the higher and lighter parts of buildings are visible; their foundations are out of sight."

THOUGHTS AS THEY OCCUR.

BY ONE WHO KEEPS HIS EYES AND EARS OPEN.

Number Fourteen.

READING.

There are few who stop to consider the miracle of reading. That a few black marks upon paper should have such an informing and transporting power is scarcely less than miraculous. Four letters are put together, H, O, M, E. The moment the eye looks upon them the soul rises up, there is a picture comes forth, a house with its yard, its barn, its well, its fields and forests. Even its most minute features come to us with exquisite nicety. We see its inmates, an old man, a venerable woman, children, domestic scenes. Years that have long slept, rise up and step forth again in newness of life. And all things are so re-fashioned that we no longer think where we are, or what we are, but seem to ourselves carried back scores of years, and walking up and down again the ways of childhood. And all this simply because there are four linear spots of ink on a sheet of white paper!

But if one considers more minutely, what is taking place in reading all the time, the marvel will still grow. The eye has learned to see without pausing to examine. The ready reader never thinks of *letters*. It is only the *word* that he sees. And even the word seems to lose individuality and is but a member of something else,—a sentence. But even the sentence seems not to be seen, but to be seen through. We see the thought rather than the symbol by which it is set forth. And the act of reading, although it is a physical act, is yet so much more mental, that we lose all consciousness of the mechanical part of it, and follow a train of pure thought, or the flow of sentiment, or a description, as if the thing itself were transpiring! It is most curious to watch a person in reading an exciting narrative, or some stirring appeal—and to see how these dead letters lord it over every inward faculty. At this black spot of printer's ink we weep—at another we laugh—at still another we are angry. This line touches one feeling, that line another, and line after line reaches in and like the fingers of a musician, touch the chords and bring forth all the soul's activity.

But the same passage, read by different men, will affect them all differently. It is not probable that the same state of mind, in all its details, has ever been twice produced, exactly alike, by any text of Scripture or any passage in Shakespeare. Something is always varied.

It is worthy of notice, that, although when we are heartily engaged in reading, we cease to see the lines and letters, and behold only their meaning, yet, when we are absent-minded, we read without seeing either the meaning or the words by which it is conveyed. We have, when much pre-occupied, read whole pages aloud, to the edification of others, without being conscious either that we saw a letter or received a single idea. The eye saw, and the mouth vocalized, while our thoughts were busy with some memory, or in arranging some plan, or in some other variant activity.

The habit of reading proof and correcting it for press leads to some singular developments. A man *feels* mistakes, rather than *sees* them. In glancing rapidly over the sentences, almost before the will can act, and while the thought is tending to hold its way right along, we feel a sort of mechanical grip, a putting on the brakes, as if something was wrong, and we go back to search and see what it is. And, behold, there is a word with *ie* put for *ei*, or an *m* is wanting, or but one *l* is put where two should be! That we did not see but only felt the mistake appears from the fact that when we search we have not the least idea of what the matter is—and we go back looking and groping to see what it was that stopped us with such a mind-jolt!

Every one's reflection will suggest other facts, in regard to the marvellousness of the simple mechanical and mental act of reading. But, *what* to read, and *how* to read, are more important than the marvels of the simple act itself; and these topics must not be begun at the heels of an article. And so, if our readers will wait, we will too.

A WORD TO WORKING GIRLS.

It would be well to gain the ear of our city working girls and whisper them a few wholesome truths. It would be well, could one persuade them that a faded, dirty dress-bonnet, and mammoth hoop, supporting a gaudy, soiled dress, are unbecoming as improper; that a neat, plain, straw bonnet, and a plain, clean, shilling calico, with absence of feathers, flowers and streamers, would be less likely to expose them to ridicule, and, what is of more consequence to their unprotected youth in a large city, *suspicion*. Sometimes, but rarely, we meet a girl of this class, dressed plainly and neatly, as she should be; with smooth hair, and modest mien, going quietly to and from her place of work. Could such but know, as a mere matter of policy, how much more interesting they appear to the sex which all women are fond of pleasing; with how much more respect a true man regards a young girl who thus respects herself, and conforms to her position and circumstances, we should see fewer soiled dresses strained over mammoth hoops, fewer cream-colored boots in place of plain black, fewer dirty artificial flowers, or brass or gilt lockets or breastpins, on the way to the shop or working-room. Little that is beautiful and lovely in woman can be expected from a girl whose ideas of propriety are so perverted. We are sure they cannot be aware of the derision their appearance excites in some, and pity in others, or they would set about an immediate reform in these things.

A REMONSTRANCE.

Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, in his lecture on *The Burdens of Society*, at the Academy of Music, last week, introduced the name of the "Spirit of the Times" in such a way as to make a first-rate advertisement for that sporting journal. Now, we have no objection to make to this; but, at the same time, it strikes us that Mr. B. might make a better "hit" the next time he delivers that lecture if he were to substitute the name of some political and business paper like the "Independent," or that of a literary and religious paper like the Ledger, for the periodical in question. Don't give a sporting-paper all the advantage of a notice in the Academy!

The Play-Ground vs. the Gymnasium.—Natural exercises are incomparably superior to artificial, for the purposes of physical education, because of the greater degree of spirit and vigor with which the student engages in them. It appears that in nearly all the educational institutions in England, the gymnasium has been deserted for the play-ground.

☞ The following lines are inscribed on John Howard Payne's tomb at Tunis:—

> Sure when thy gentle spirit fled
> To realms beyond the azure dome,
> With arms outstretched, God's angels said,
> "Welcome to Heaven's '*Home, Sweet Home!*'"

Silk and Iron.—"Never allow yourself to pass for a mere man of silk. Let the world know you have *some iron in you*."

A New Story, by Mr. Cobb, will be commenced in the next issue of the Ledger.

MOUNT VERNON IN 1796.

THE MOUNT VERNON PAPERS.

BY EDWARD EVERETT.

Exitus Acta Probat.—*Washington's Motto.*

Number Eighteen.

THE FINANCIAL DISTRESS OF THE YEAR 1857.

PART I.

An enquiry into the causes of the distress of the year 1857 proposed—Difficulty of the investigation—The facts of the case stated—And the extent of the distress briefly described—The general paralysis of business and credit—What could have produced it, in the absence of all the usual causes of public distress?—Its probable cause to be found in Debt*—An estimate of the personal debt of the people of the United States—Its annual interest ninety millions of dollars—The business debt is vastly greater—The Corporate debt—The Bank debt and the elements of which it is composed—Banks create no additional capital—By sudden contraction of credit in times of pressure produce or increase the panic.*

Shortly after my engagement to write these papers was announced, I began to receive letters, from different parts of the country, calling my attention to various subjects of enquiry and discussion. Among other letters I received one from a friendly correspondent in the West, personally a stranger to me, requesting me to state, if possible, the precise cause of the financial distress of the year 1857; to explain how it happened, that, in a condition of great and general prosperity, the country should have been struck as with a palsy in all its business concerns, from which it has hardly yet, after a lapse of eighteen months, fully recovered; and, as this is not the first instance of events of this kind, to point out how their periodical recurrence, in something like a regular cycle, can be prevented.

My well meaning correspondent has given me a problem, which requires for its satisfactory solution, a much wiser man than I am;—a problem which, in its entire comprehension, will not soon receive a full practical answer. Some of the topics involved in the enquiry into the causes of the distress of the year before the last, are of an abstruse and subtile character, particularly those which relate to the subject of credit, and how far it ought to be resorted to in carrying on the business operations of the community,—and the effect of a currency, composed of coin and paper, on the money value of commodities at home and abroad. These are topics, with respect to which different opinions are entertained by judicious and well informed men. The other part of the enquiry, how the periodical recurrence of these seasons of general financial and commercial embarrassment can be prevented, embraces moral considerations, the justice of which will not be questioned in theory, but which it is extremely difficult to reduce to practice, to an extent sufficient to affect the condition of a community.

The fact itself was pronounced by my unknown but intelligent correspondent one that would be utterly incredible, had it not been matter of daily observation throughout the Union; it was nothing less than the almost instantaneous suspension of active business operations of every kind and in every branch, without any manifest assignable cause. A more than usually abundant harvest had filled the granaries of the great West to repletion, but at the season of the year when the produce of the Interior is finding its way to its markets, domestic and foreign, the steamers on the great rivers and lakes stood still; the canal-boats ceased to ply; and the Rail Road trains moved backward and forward, with less than half the usual amount of travel and transportation. I had occasion just as the crisis was coming on, to travel from Boston to Buffalo, to deliver an address before the New York State Agricultural Society. Notwithstanding the great resort to the State Fair, the travel, for more than half the way, was reduced far below the average of ordinary seasons. I took passage at Buffalo, on the 9th of October 1857, in one of the magnificent steamers which plied between that City and Detroit, and which was capable of lodging two thousand persons. It was one of three of equal or greater capacity. The number of persons actually on board at that time did not exceed fifty! The boats on the line had been for some time running to great loss, and this trip of the 9th of October was the last of the season. After that day they were laid up;—two or three weeks earlier than usual.

A similar state of things prevailed in the manufacturing regions. The factories either wholly stopped or worked on short time; and then rather as a choice of evils, to prevent the dispersion of skilled labor, and injury to the machinery by disuse. The navigating interest shared the distress. Our vessels brought home cargoes that passed into the public stores, or were re-exported at great loss. The freighting business was nearly annihilated. The all infecting malady of the country showed itself, in its most malignant form, in the banks, and a general suspension of specie payments completed at once and indicated the universal distress. On the 6th of October as I was leaving Boston, I was told by the President of one of the strongest and best conducted of our institutions, that, let what would happen, the banks would stand firm; and in less than a fortnight a universal suspension of specie payments had begun in New York, and extended itself throughout the country. So complete and universal was the stagnation, that it was impossible to procure a draft on New York, by which the modest proceeds of my oration on the Character of Washington could be remitted, from a prosperous town in the interior of Michigan.

A short time only elapsed, before the necessary consequences of such a general suspension of business were seen in a prostration as general of credit and in rapidly multiplying bankruptcies of individuals and corporations. Powerful manufacturing companies, or what were deemed such, failed; substantial private houses or houses accounted substantial, sunk; and the great industrial classes of the community, who live by the earnings of their daily labor, were thrown out of employment, and driven to straits for the support of themselves and their families. The general government at length shared in the embarrassment of the people;—the revenue fell off, and temporary expedients became necessary to carry on the ordinary operations of the Treasury.

What produced this most extraordinary condition of things? The country was in profound peace. No hostile armies traversed and wasted it,—a frequent occurrence in Europe and the East. Our neutral commerce was not, as at some former periods of our history, swept from the ocean by the edicts of unscrupulous rival belligerents, intent upon injuring each other, and to effect that object, trampling the Law of Nations under foot. No embargo or non-intercourse sealed our ports. No untimely frosts,—no mysterious blight menaced famine or even scarcity. No pestilence walked in darkness, nor destruction wasted at noonday. A week before the panic commenced there was the appearance of universal prosperity, and after it commenced and while it lasted, the country possessed, and that in abundance, all the solid elements of substantial well-being. Under these circumstances, how was it possible,—under similar circumstances how is it ever possible,—that an intelligent, energetic, industrious, and in the aggregate virtuous people, living under a free government, and as far as political relations are concerned, enjoying privileges elsewhere and before unknown in the world, should, even for a short time, fall into a state of general embarrassment and profound distress, such as I have described?

I hardly know whether it would be possible, even in a voluminous treatise on the subject, to return a full and satisfactory answer to this inquiry; whether, with business relations extending throughout a country so vast and with a population so enterprizing and active as ours, living and acting in a highly artificial state of society, and especially under a financial system, singularly complicated and refined,—it is possible to trace and analyze the remote and occult causes of such a phenomenon. They may, like the ultimate secrets of the material universe, defy the grasp of our minds.

But I am inclined to think, that there is one great efficient cause, which will fully account for a large part, perhaps the whole, of this mighty and terrible effect; a cause so simple, so homely, so near at hand, that men overlook it, while they are exploring the metaphysics of currency, credit, and the balance of trade.

If I mistake not, the distress of the year 1857 was produced by an enemy more formidable than hostile armies; by a pestilence more deadly than fever or plague; by a visitation more destructive than the frosts of Spring or the blights of Summer. I believe that it was caused by a mountain load of Debt. The whole country, individuals and communities, trading-houses, corporations, towns, cities, States, were laboring under a weight of debt, beneath which the ordinary business relations of the country were, at length, arrested, and the great instrument usually employed for carrying them on, Credit, broken down.—Let us, by looking into a few particulars, see whether this is a true statement. I apprehend that the enquiry will disclose some startling facts.

I will first speak of what may be called the personal debt of the country, which runs up, in the aggregate, to an almost fabulous amount. The free population of the United States amounts, at the present time, to about 26,000,000 of individuals, which will give, in the ordinary calculation, 5,200,000 heads of families. I assume that each one of these persons is three hundred dollars in debt. This is of course a purely conjectural sum. Many persons may think it too large; others may think it too small; such is my own impression. I believe it will be perfectly safe to assume that, in consequence of the natural proclivity to anticipate income, to buy on credit, to live a little beyond our means, the community carries with it through life a debt of at least three hundred dollars for each family. I am aware that there are many persons who "owe no man anything but to love one another;"—some, I fear, there are, who obey the apostolic injunction, without that benign qualification. But, on the contrary, how many there are of the 5,200,000 heads of families, who owe a great deal more than three hundred dollars; how many individuals, not included in the 5,200,000, who have larger or smaller debts! How large a proportion of the real property of the country,—the houses, the farms, the plantations,—is under mortgage; and of those who have no real property to give in security, how many pledge their credit and honor to an extent at least equal to that assumed! When all these things are considered, I think it will be felt, that three hundred dollars is a moderate sum to assume, as an *average* amount of debt for every head of a family. This basis of calculation gives us 1560 millions, say fifteen hundred millions of dollars as the private personal debt of the American people; or about one half of that national debt of England, which sits like an incubus on the taxable resources of that country. The interest of this sum is ninety millions of dollars, which the people of this country have to pay annually on their personal debts. Stated in this naked form it is a frightful sum; and no small part of the straits, discomforts, and troubles of domestic life arise from this perpetual strain upon the family resources. Still, in a time of prosperity, the burden is divided among so many, that it is carried with greater or less ease, according to the amount which weighs on each individual; for though we assume for calculation an equal average amount, in point of fact the burden is very unequally divided. Some are prudent enough to be almost or quite free; others, as the popular expression is, are "over head and ears."

The business debt, whether in trade, manufactures, or agriculture is vastly greater; probably greater in this country, in proportion to its population, than in any other in the world. Almost all persons in business, extend their transactions very far beyond their capital. A merchant or manufacturer with a capital of one hundred thousand dollars will often trade upon a million. This I have been told, by two or three persons themselves extensively engaged in trade, is not an extravagant statement of the ratio between the capital and the business of our American traders and manufacturers.—If this ratio is thought too great, let us reduce it one half, and suppose that our men of business, on an average, extend their transactions to five times the amount of their capital; that is, that a person with a solid capital of a hundred thousand dollars, will buy and sell to the amount of half a million. He will, in that case, have to carry a debt which exceeds his capital five fold. On this basis, to get at what may be called the business debt of the country, we must multiply the business capital by five. I presume not to go in to the enormous amount,—the hundreds and thousands of millions, which would result from this multiplication, and which represent the business debt of the country.

This debt, it is true, unlike the personal debt, is supposed to be balanced by a still larger amount of credits. The trader who has bought four hundred thousand dollars worth of goods on credit, has sold them or expects to sell them for five hundred thousand; but he is paid in the first instance in credit, that is in debt.—While things are prosperous this untold mass of debt can be carried. If all the speculative purchases and sales succeed, the debts on one side will be balanced by the credits on the other, but if any great derangement takes place, distress, perhaps ruin, ensues;—to a few individuals, if the disturbing cause is confined to a locality or a single article of commerce; to large bodies,—to the whole community, if it is of a comprehensive nature. As soon as the business debt becomes oppressive, the personal debt above alluded to begins to pinch; and it may be observed (what we omitted to state, in reference to the ratio of capital and business), that the capital of the country is at all times charged with the maintenance of those to whom it belongs,—a circumstance which materially impairs its efficiency as the means of doing business. Most men possessed of a clear property of one hundred thousand dollars, probably live at an expense of at least six thousand a year, which reduces to that extent the efficiency of the capital as a basis to trade upon.

Then there is the corporate debt of the country, and this of two kinds, public and private.—By the former, I mean the debt of the general government, of the States, cities, towns, and other political and public bodies; by the latter, the debt of the various private corporations, the churches, the associations of all kinds, Rail Road companies, and all the other incorporated bodies which have business transactions. The amount of this kind of debt is of course enormous, many hundreds of millions, and much of it has been improvidently contracted; so that in many cases no permanent value has been created in return.

I reserve for the last place the bank-debt, which is of a somewhat peculiar nature, and which exercises by its fluctuations a controlling, sometimes disastrous, influence on all the other debt,—that is all the other business,—of the country. The remark already made with reference to the ratio of the capital and business of individuals, applies with nearly equal force to the capital and business of the banks. They are, at all times, largely in debt. Their circulation is all debt; it is avowedly a promise to pay on demand. The deposits are so much debt, which the banks are equally obliged to pay on demand; and these two kinds of debt are the basis of a large part of their business operations. Besides this, bank capital, however solid, does not even profess to be any positive addition to the wealth of the community. The sums of which it is made up, of course, existed elsewhere before, and, except when hoarded, were, in some way or other, employed. The banks can do nothing but collect them into masses, available for business. This is an important public benefit, but it is not a creation of capital. The circulating paper which the banks issue, can add nothing to the capital of the country, for it is nothing but the evidence of debt. The bank borrows it from the public without interest, and lends it back to the public at six or seven per cent. That such an operation should be thought to add to the wealth of a community is not one of the least remarkable delusions of the day.

The Banks then are among the largest debtors of the country. It is true they are also among the largest creditors; but their credits are on time; their debts are due on demand; and their immediately available means are notoriously inadequate to meet that demand. By rapid contractions of their credits when their debts are pressed upon them for payment, they create or increase a panic, and when it is created, they suspend payment, and drag the whole community with them into bankruptcy.

If such, as we have described it, is the real state of things,—if the country is burdened with this enormous amount of debt, public and private, individual and corporate, it is quite evident, that on the occurrence of any cause, real or imaginary, which powerfully affects the public mind, which produces alarm and so checks the renewal or the extension of credit, and compels the whole business community to *demand* payment in order that it may *make* payment, a general stoppage must ensue. There is no solid basis on which to stand and resist the rushing tide. Almost everybody is under obligations beyond his immediately available means; and the few that have property are afraid to trust it in any investment. Above a million of dollars, belonging to a person who never willingly left a dollar unemployed, lay idle in the banks of Boston, during the panic of the year 1857.

The real cause of the distress then of the year before the last was the overwhelming Debt of the country, and the shock given to credit, by which alone that debt is sustained. I reserve to another occasion the application of these views, as suggesting the only practical remedy.

* * *

THE POETRY OF WORK.

What a pleasure it is *to see anything perfectly done.* I never go "shopping" that I do not look on with admiration while the storekeeper so deftly does up my parcels. I believe no *woman* who has not acquired the professional shop-keeping touch, can do this decently. I like, too, to watch a group of men painting a house, provided the platform upon which they stand is so strong that my blood does not curdle lest their merry song should never be finished. With what a dexterous, careful, delicate touch they brighten up the unsightly wall; there is fascination to the looker-on in their skillful progress. Carpentering, too, I like; what pretty silky curled shavings they plane off; how many times when, a child I placed them on my head for ringlets, have I mentally resolved to be a carpenter's wife, that I might always have plenty. How sure the stroke of their hammer upon the nail which a woman would bend, or break in pieces, beside jamming her fingers to a jelly. Mark the sturdy porter, too, as he tosses a huge "Saratoga trunk" lightly as a feather upon his back, and poising it, marches up uncounted stairs without tripping or bumping.

I like to see a strong man holding a fiery horse by a slight rein and a strong will. I like to see the oarsman in his red shirt-sleeves, pulling away over the sparkling water; I like to see the rough, red-faced omnibus driver making change, halting, gesticulating, hallooing to passers-by, all in the same breath. I like anything that is wide-awake and efficient, and if it be beautiful at the same time, so much the better. I like to see the cook toss eggs into a foam so nicely, with head turned the other way, watching pots, skillets and frying-pans, and at the same time giving orders to half a dozen subordinates. I like to see a milliner twist a ribbon into a thousand fanciful shapes while talking, or selecting a rose from one box, a green spray from another, then a spear of wheat, a daisy and a poppy, twine them together with an artist's taste and touch. I like to see the dress-maker fit the glossy silk to the curve of limbs as soft as the silky fabric. I like to see the flushed pressman sliding the damp newspapers from the "form" without a flaw or a wrinkle. I like to see a mother strip her little tender babe, and bathe its fragile limbs with that wonderful delicacy of touch which mothers only know, singing, caressing, patting and soothing, till the lovely task is done. I like to see those little imps of newsboys running indiscriminately between the legs of man and beast, yelling out their precocious wisdom about "accidents and arrivals;" dodging under carts, and coming out safe in wind and limb; thriving in spite of dirt and rags, to turn up, some day, ten to one, in a big marble store up town, as bookseller or publisher.

I am not at all sure, now that blessed chloroform is discovered by which my faith in the predicted millennium has had a most vigorous quickening (why *don't* they build a statue to the discoverer?) that I could not look on admiringly while the surgeon's knife wound amid veins and arteries with almost omnipotent skill, his patient lying calm as a sleeping infant the while.

And now the thought comes over me with overwhelming force, how strange that we, who so adore strength, power, beauty and perfection, should be content with its circumscribed *human* progress; never look for it, never worship it, where it is limitless, unchangeable, unfettered by selfishness, caprice or injustice. Alas! till we learn this, we shall, vine-like, throw out our tendrils to the mercy of every passing breeze, with nothing sure to twine around or cling to.

Fanny Fern.

THE GUNMAKER OF MOSCOW;

OR,

VALDIMIR THE MONK.

A TALE OF

THE EMPIRE UNDER PETER THE GREAT.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR

CHAPTER XVIII.

STRANGE AND COMPLICATED.

Ruric Nevel dreamed that he was a great general, and that he was upon the eve of an engagement. He gained a view of the commander of the opposing army, and he saw that it was the Duke of Tula. Yet the Duke had an enormous hump upon his back, and instead of the usual uniform he wore the garb of a priest. This was very strange;—at least, so ran Ruric's thoughts in the dream. Soon the engagement commenced, and the loud-mouthed artillery opened its thunder. The din was deafening and strange, and Ruric shouted in vain to his aids, for the roar of cannon drank up his words direct from his lips. Louder and more loud grew the crash, and finally Ruric started for the charge. His horse was shot under him, and with a quick leap he reached his feet.

"*Ruric! Ruric! My master!*"

Slowly the youth opened his eyes, and Paul stood by him in his night-clothes. He gazed about him, and found that he had leaped from his bed, and now stood shivering upon the floor. The boy held a lighted candle in his hand.

"Don't you hear that racket at the door?" asked Paul.

"What!—Ha!—there is some one knocking!"

"And have you not heard it before?"

"No."

"Why did you leap up thus?"

"I was dreaming."

"I thought 'twas the noise below. Why—they've been making a perfect thunder of noise down there. Shall I go down?"

"Yes, go, Paul, and I will dress as soon as possible. What time is it?"

"It must be near daybreak."

And thus speaking, Paul turned and went to his own room, where he threw on an outer garment, and then he went down. At the door he found a stout man, wrapped up in furs, while close by stood a sledge with two horses attached to it. In the east the golden tints of morn were already visible.

"A gunmaker named Nevel lives here, does he not?" asked the applicant, after having first made some passing remark on the trouble he had had in starting some one up.

Paul feared that there might be something out of the way, but he dared not tell a falsehood where it could not possibly be of any use, so he answered in the affirmative.

"Then let me see him as speedily as possible."

"He is preparing to come down, sir. If you will walk in you may see him very soon."

The stranger followed the boy into the kitchen, where it was quite warm, the fire in the furnace having been burning all night. Ere long Ruric came down, and the visitor started up.

"How?" said the gunmaker, starting forward and extending his hand. "Demetrius?"

"Aye, my friend," the Greek replied, with a smile. "I am an early visitor, eh?"

"I should say so; but, early or late, you are welcome."

"Thank you. But we must not spend much time here now. My sledge is here at your door, and I wish you to accompany me."

"But wherefore is this?" asked the youth, in surprise. "What has happened now?"

"I'll tell you: Last night Olga, the Duke, came to see the Emperor. I had just been giving his majesty some exercise at the sword, so I was present at the interview. The Duke wished for power to arrest you; and in explanation of the request, he stated that you were at the head of a band of robbers here in the city, and that you had already committed several robberies. I needn't tell you all he said, but he made you out to by a most unmitigated villain, and with this the Emperor granted his request. Olga wished for power to execute you at once, but Peter would not go so far as that. He gave the power of arrest, but ordered the Duke to bring you before him."

Ruric stood for a few moments like one confounded.

"Then he must carry me to the Emperor," he said, at length.

"Ah," returned Demetrius, with a dubious shake of the head, "be not too sure of that. I saw a look upon his face when he turned away that meant more than he dared to speak. As sure as fate he never means that you shall see the Emperor. I know it—I saw it in his evil eye."

"But will he dare disobey the order?"

"Yes, for he hopes to escape by falsehood. How easy for him to swear that he had to kill you to take you."

"I see—I see."

"Then come with me."

"Did the Emperor send you?"

"No; but I take the responsibility. I will take you to him myself. Be sure the Duke's hirelings will be here before long. Trust to me and all shall be well."

Ruric pondered a few moments, and he saw that his friend was right.

"Let me go and see my mother," he said, "and then I will go with you."

"But make haste," urged the Greek, "for the Duke's men may be here soon, and I do not wish them to see you. And—tell your mother to inform whoever may call, that she knows not where you are gone, but that you will be back at night."

The youth nodded assent, and then went into his mother's room, where he explained to her what had happened, and what he was about to do.

"And how long must these things be?" the mother cried, gazing eagerly upon her son.

"Not long," returned Ruric. "I may do much towards settling the matter to-day. But fear not, for I am now safe, and shall be until I see you again."

The widow promised all that her son asked, and soon became assured that all was well; but Paul was left with the duty of attending to those who might come for Ruric, though they might see the widow if they persisted. The boy promised to tell all that asked for his master that he was gone away on business, and would not return till evening.

The mother came out before Ruric was ready to start, and her examination of the Greek's countenance seemed to be satisfactory, for the anxious look left her face, and she looked upon the visitor kindly.

As Ruric entered the sledge the dawn of day was plainly announced in the east, and the stars were paling in the sky. The Greek did not take the direct road to the Kremlin, but struck off to the westward, and so entered by the Neglina.

An hour later a party of five men drove up to the gunmaker's cot. They were dark, villanous-looking men, and murder was plainly stamped upon their faces. They entered the dwelling, but they found not their prey. They stormed and swore, but to no purpose, and when they were convinced that the gunmaker was not there they went away.

An hour later still, and another party drove up to the same cot. It consisted of two men in a double sledge, one of whom was Valdimir the monk. The fat, mystic man entered the cot, and there he remained for some time. When he came out the widow and Paul accompanied him; and they all got into the sledge and drove off together.

What did it mean?

* * * * * * * * *

It was past noon. The proud Duke was once more alone in his private room, and he was pacing uneasily to and fro. There was a cloud upon his brow, and trouble in his soul. His lips were firmly set, and his hands clenched. Ever and anon he muttered to himself, and when he did so his hands would work nervously and emphatically. He looked often at his watch, and often he stopped near the door and hearkened.

At length came that well-known shuffling, uncertain, cat-like tread. He threw open his door, and the dark priest glided in.

"Ha, Savotano, I've waited for you," the Duke uttered, sinking into a chair, for his nervous walking had made him weary. "Now tell me the work is done. O, for God's sake, don't tell me again of failure!"

"Alas, my lord—"

"Hold, Savotano! You are not going to tell me of failure!"

"Not really a failure, my lord," the priest returned, nervously. "But our men did not find the gunmaker at home. He had gone when we got there, and no one knew where."

"No one knew? Did not his mother know?"

"No. She said he did not tell her where he was going. He only left word that he was going on business, and should not return till evening."

"By heavens! I think he has fled."

"No, my lord. I do not think so. I think he must have had business."

"But what time were you there?"

"Shortly after sunrise."

"And had he gone then?"

"Aye—he had been gone an hour."

"It looks suspicious. But the men must be there this evening. He shall not escape me now."

"There is no fear of that, my lord. I will see that he is *apprehended* as soon as he returns."

"Right, Savotano—right! And now to the other matter. I am to be married this afternoon!"

"Ah—so soon?"

"Yes—I waste no more time. What is the use?"

"None, my lord—none at all."

"Then you must remain, for the ceremony shall be performed as soon as possible."

"And does the Countess know of your determination?"

"Yes. She knew it ere she rested last night. I told her she should not escape again till she could carry my name with her. By the mass, sir, she sealed her own doom! Ha, ha, ha,—the Duke of Tula will have his coffers filled again. Money must come somehow, and how else so easily as this?"

"Sure enough," returned the priest, with that old coarse, wicked smile. "Sure enough, my lord—how?"

"In no way. Ho, I'll put the seal upon that budget, and stamp it—*mine!* So here you remain until I am married. To-day—until that ceremony is performed, I am not sure; but to-morrow they cannot harm me. Oh—she shall be mine then! She shall be mine, Savotano. To-day she is my wife—and to-morrow all the powers combined cannot undo the work. I have waited long enough. I have worked and schemed, and have puzzled my brain to one great purpose; and yet each step I had marked out has failed me. Damonoff lives—the gunmaker lives—the Black Monk lives—but *I, too,* live! Ha—*I live,* Savotano; and now the work shall be done as it might have been done at first had I been so disposed!"

The Duke had arisen to his feet while speaking thus, and his manner had been frantic and excited. As he ceased speaking he sank back into his chair and gazed the priest in the face. He was all iron now. Every nerve and muscle was set, and a fierce determination was in his soul.

* * * * * * * * *

There is one more scene in the ducal palace, and it goes on at the very time while the Duke and his tool are together.

Valdimir the monk was in the chamber of the

Countess, and the fair occupant and her maid were there with him.

"And you are sure he means to make you his wife to-day?" said the monk, in continuation of a conversation which had been going on for some moments—"that he will have the ceremony performed whether you consent or not?"

"Yes, sir," the Countess murmured. She gazed into the strange man's face a few moments after she had spoken, and then, starting quickly up, she threw herself upon her knees before him.

"Oh!" she cried, with her clasped hands raised towards him, "can you not help me in this bitter moment? Do not say no. Oh, I know you have some strange power—and you may help me. You cannot know the misery I suffer. Oh! earth has no pangs more cruel! In all the long catalogue of woes there is nothing more bitter. Sir—" and the maiden raised both hands toward heaven as she thus continued—"sooner than be that man's wife I would with my own hand let my life-blood out were not the act a sin against my God! But you may help me."

"Alas, lady, I cannot assure you now."

"Oh—say not so. You can help me flee from here—you can find me some hiding-place—some place where my days can be spent in safety from this great evil."

"But how can I help you away, lady?"

"Because you know some secret entrance to the palace. You know some secret passage, else you would not be here now."

"True," the monk replied, in a perplexed tone, "I do know such a way, for by that way I came, and by that way shall I return; but I cannot convey you away thus. I am sorry that——"

The monk stopped here, for at that moment a heavy footfall sounded without. He had started up from his seat when the door opened, and the stout Duke entered. The Countess uttered one low, quick cry, and sank down. She would have sunk to the floor had not Zenobie caught her and bore her to the couch.

The monk stood erect, with his arms folded across his breast, but his right hand was hidden within the bosom of his robe. The Duke started back like one thunderstruck, and it was some moments ere he could gain the power of speech. He turned first as pale as death, and then the blood mounted hotly, fiercely to his brow.

"How came you here?" he gasped, in a hissing, frantic tone.

"To learn of your wickedness, Duke of Tula," calmly responded Valdimir.

"Ha! do you beard me in my very palace, dog? But you have ventured here once too often. As sure as there is life in me you go not hence alive!"

"Hold, Olga!" spoke the monk,—and so strange and powerful was the tone that though the Duke had turned towards the door, yet he stopped. "This lady tells me you mean to make her your wife. Is it so?"

"Out, accursed monk! Who gave thee right to question me?"

"Proud Duke, you shall know that anon. But listen: If you force this lady to that thing you do it at your peril! You had better seek the fabled potion of the gods, and drink and be a dog, than do that thing!"

"Hold a moment, monk!" cried ths Duke, now nearly blind with passion. "You go not hence alive!—What ho, there! Without, I say!—Zenobie, pull that bell-cord—quick!—Back, monk—you pass not here alive!—What ho! Without there!"

"Beware, Olga!" spoke the monk, as calmly as before, at the same time drawing a heavy pistol from his bosom and cocking it. "I would shoot you as I would a dog! Offer one motion of impediment to my passage, and you die on the instant!"

Instinctively the Duke moved on one side. There was something in the look and tone of the strange man that he dared not cope with then. The monk passed out, but as soon as he was gone the Duke sprang to the bell-cord and pulled it till he broke it. In a few moments more the servants came rushing in.

"Out, dogs!" the madman shouted, "and stop that monk from leaving the palace. Kill him on the spot where you find him if he dares to offer the least resistance! Kill him—you have my orders, and I am alone responsible!"

Thus speaking the Duke rushed from the apartment to start up more of his household. First to the gate of the court he went, but the monk was not there, nor had he been there. Then he rushed to the postern, but that was locked, and the snow was untrodden before it. He returned to the hall, and one by one the servants came back from the search.

No monk could be found!

At first Olga was tempted to believe that his servants deceived him; but he quickly set that thought aside, for he could see by their countenances that they were as much astonished as he. The search was renewed, but the strange man was not to be found! There was some wonder, and—some uneasiness.

CHAPTER XIX.

CONCLUSION.

Pale as death sat the fair young Countess in her dressing-room. She did not tremble now, for every nerve had become fixed in utter despair.

"Will you not change your dress, my mistress?" asked Zenobie, in a low, tremulous tone.

"No, no," the maiden replied; and her voice sounded strangely even in her own ear, it was so low and hollow. "Why should I dress for the sacrifice? The dumb beast may suffer garlands about its neck before being led to the heathen altar; but alas! God has not given me a brute's ignorance to help me now. No, no, Zenobie, I will not dress for the bride."

"But the Duke expects it."

"I care not. He cannot ask me to do it. He may do all he wills, for I am helpless here, but he dare not ask."

"Oh! my dear mistress," cried the faithful girl, throwing her arms about the neck of her mistress, and weeping as she did so, "would to God that I could bear this for you."

"I thank you all the same, my dearest friend," the Countess replied, gazing gratefully up into her attendant's face; "but it matters not much now. I shall not suffer long. My sorrow will soon cease."

Zenobie looked inquiringly up, but she did not speak.

"God will soon take me home," the wretched maiden murmured, after a pause. "I feel the chill hand upon my heart even now, and I know that earth cannot bind my spirit long with such a curse upon it!"

Zenobie had no words of consolation more to offer, so she did all she could do. She drew the head of her mistress upon her bosom, and there she held it for a long time. She held it thus until the door of the apartment was opened and a female domestic entered.

"Lady," the new-comer said, trembling perceptibly while she spoke, "the Duke bade me tell you he awaited your coming below in the hall."

She stopped here, and seemed to wait for an answer; but Rosalind did not speak.

"What answer shall I give him, lady?"

At this the Countess started up, but she sank back again without speaking.

"Tell him we will come," interposed Zenobie, who saw that the announcement had taken the last power of effort from her mistress.

"Yes—yes," whispered the Countess, as the messenger hesitated and gazed inquisitively into her face.

And with this the woman left the apartment.

"My dear mistress," spoke Zenobie, now calling all her power of self-control to her aid, "all means of help and escape we have tried in vain. The time has come—"

"Oh, God have mercy!" groaned the Countess.

—"And we must meet it, since there is no further hope. It will be better to go down at once than to arouse the bad man's anger by more delay. Were there the least glimmer of hope, we would not go; but there is not. You know what I mean."

A few moments Rosalind sat like one dead. Then she started up, with her hands clasped, and raised her eyes towards heaven. She did not speak aloud, but her lips moved, and she slowly uttered a prayer to God—and it was none the less eloquent because it was silent. Then she turned to her companion. Her lips were set and colorless, and a deathly look had overspread her whole face.

"Zenobie," she said, in a tone which bore no feeling more than the gliding of cold, icy, sound, "I am ready. Once more, before the last joy of earth departs from me, let me bless thee, and press thee to my bosom. I am pure now!"

She opened her arms as she spoke, and when she closed them again Zenobie was within their embrace.

"Bless you—bless you ever! God keep and guide you to the end of life, and then receive you home to Himself!—Kiss me.—There—I am ready now!"

The broken-hearted girl wiped the tear from her eye, and in a moment more she was as cold and passionless as before.

"Lead on, Zenobie. I shall walk without help."

Without looking around the Moslem maiden led the way to the hall. She walked slowly, and she fancied she could hear the beating of her mistress's heart. In the hall stood the Duke with some half-dozen of his own male attendants. He took the hand of the Countess as she approached him, and gazed earnestly into her face; but he did not speak. He led her towards one of the drawing-rooms, and when they entered there they found the hump-backed priest already in waiting. Rosalind came well-nigh fainting when she saw this miserable villain ready for his work. She knew now that the priest was like the master.

"You see, my dear Countess," spoke the Duke, in a low, hypocritical tone, "that we have all prepared. I trust we shall have no trouble before this holy man."

This last sentence was spoken in a threatening tone, but it had no effect upon Rosalind. She hardly heard the words he spoke.

"Come, father," said Olga, turning now to the priest. "We are ready."

Savotano moved forward, and mumbled a Latin prayer. Then he looked upon the twain before him, and directed them to kneel.

"No! no! no!" gasped the fair Countess, trembling for the first time. "I cannot do that!"

"Kneel!" hissed the Duke, between his clenched teeth. And as he spoke he grasped the maiden more firmly by the arm and forced her down. She uttered a quick cry of pain as she felt the unmerciful gripe, but she could not resist the strong arm of her persecutor.

"Now go on!" the Duke cried, as he held the maiden down. "Go on, Savotano, and let the business be done as soon as possible."

"Hold!"

It was a voice of thunder which spoke thus, and it came from the door. The Duke started to his feet, and he beheld Ruric Nevel, the gunmaker, approaching the spot. But the youth came not alone. Behind him came the huge bulk of Valdimir the monk. And more still—back of the monk came the widow, Claudia Nevel, and the boy Paul. And then there was, besides all this, a heavy tramp of feet in the hall, and the clang of steel.

"Hold! Stop this accursed mockery!" Ruric shouted, as he strode up the apartment.

"Miserable dog!" gasped the Duke, mad and frantic with rage, "how dare you come hither!"

"Look you, proud Duke," the monk interposed, coming quickly forward, "I am at the botton of all this. *I* have come to stop this foul work!"

Rosalind had started to her feet when she first heard Ruric's voice; and now, as the monk spoke, a ray of hope darted to her soul, and with a quick bound she reached her lover's side.

"Ruric! Ruric!" It was all she could say; and with a gushing, whelming flood of tears she pillowed her head upon his boson, and his stout arms were wound fondly about her.

"Fear not," he whispered, "for, oh! Rosalind, thou art safe now."

The mad Duke saw the movement, and with a bitter curse he started towards them.

"Now by the living gods!" he shouted, with his fists clenched, and his eyes flashing fire, "you have come to your death!—What ho, there!—Without! Slaves, where are ye?"

In a monent more the side door was thrown open, and a dozen of the Duke's servants came rushing in.

"Ha!" Olga cried, "you are in time. Seize these dogs! Kill them on the spot if they offer one act of resistance. At them now! Down with the dogs!"

"HOLD!" It was Valdimir who spoke, and every arm dropped as they heard that voice. It was different from the voice they had heard the fat monk use before.

The Duke started as though a thunderbolt had burst at his feet.

"Who art thou?" he gasped, staggering further back.

"Olga—Duke of Tula—" spoke the monk, in tones which sounded strange for him, because they were so different from those he had been wont to use, "I am thy master!"

As he spoke he threw open the long black robe which enveloped his person, and cast it upon the floor at his feet, and there it lay, a huge pile of wadding and stuffing! The vast rotundity of his person was gone, and the strange man now stood in his own fair form. His chin—that prominent chin—was no more hidden, and he was but a small man—not much larger than the boy Paul who stood near him. Next he placed his hand to his head and tore away the tight skull-cap, and the ring of gray hair came away with it, leaving a cluster of glossy hair floating down over the neck and shoulders!

"*It is the* EMPEROR!" gasped Savotano, staggering back.

"Aye!" cried Peter, turning his darkly-flashing eye upon the staggering Duke, "I am your Emperor.——Paul, go and call the guard."

The boy hastened from the place, and when he returned he was followed by a party of the Imperial Guard.

"Mercy! mercy! sire!" gasped the Duke, sinking down on his knees.

But the Emperor answered him not. He only turned to his guard and bade them secure the Duke and the foul priest.

Rosalind Valdai gazed upon the transformed man until the strange truth worked its way to her struggling mind, and then she turned once more to Ruric. She gazed up into his face, and she saw the holy smile which rested there. The joyful truth came to her now, and with one long, low cry of frantic hope and bliss she sank upon her noble lover's bosom. She could not speak—she could only cling closely and more close to her loved protector, and with her head pillowed close by the heart that beat for her, she wept away all the grief of her opened soul.

"Olga," spoke the Emperor, after the nobleman had been firmly bound, "your race of iniquity is run."

"No, no, sire," the Duke cried, in humble, supplicating tones, "say not so. In this single thing I may have been wrong, but let my mad, consuming love be some palliation for my offence. Oh! you will not crush me with public shame for this. You will not cast from you one who loves you well."

"Oh, miserable man!" said Peter, with a look of utter contempt upon the base wretch, "add not perjury to your already accumulated crimes. Hark ye: Some months since I knew there was conspiracy in my capital, and I knew there was much of evil, too, which was never reported to me. I resolved to ferret it out, and to that end I meant to mingle among my people without their knowing me. So I had that robe made, and so stuffed and wadded that I could even hide my chin in the seeming fat. I assumed the garb, and my own master-at arms did not at first know me. Once in a while I made my page assume the garb and be seen in it about the city, and thus all thought of suspecting me was cut off. I have been at work, Olga, and I have found out all I sought. It was mere accident that first threw me in the way of this young gunmaker, and it was by accident, too, that I overheard the Count Damonoff and his companion discussing the subject of their mission to the gunmaker's shop. Of course I followed that scheme up, and I should have snatched our fair young Countess from your grasp ere this had I not been desirous of arriving at another point first. Perhaps you know that the Princess Sophia and the Minister Galitzin have planned a grand overturn of my throne.—Ah, you tremble!—And now, my noble Duke," the Emperor continued, in a deeper tone, "I have learned of your own guilt in that affair! O—you love me, do you? But I know you now. Two of your poor tools are in my hands. They are named Totma and Viska. They have made a full confession, and I now know all your villanies. I know what you have planned against this noble Countess, and against her noble lover; I know what you planned against the Count Damonoff; and I know, too what you have planned against your Emperor.—Not a word, sir! You are the Duke of Tula no more. A more worthy man wears the ducal coronet from this hour. Ruric Nevel shall assume the station you have disgraced, and I know he will ennoble it once more."

As Peter ceased speaking he waved his hand to his officers, and they bore the prisoners from the room. The priest said not a word; but Olga cursed loudly and bitterly.

When the dark villains had gone Peter stepped forward and took Rosalind's hand. There was a tear in his bright eye, and his nether lip trembled.

"Fair cousin," he said, in a low, soft tone, "I could not promise thee that thou should'st not wed with the Duke of Tula, for I had even then planned that you should do that thing. But it will not be very hard, will it?"

The Countess gazed up, and a murmur of thanks was upon her lips; but the gushing flood started forth anew, and she could only look the joyful blessings she could not speak. Peter imprinted a kiss upon her pure brow, and then gave her hand to Ruric, and as he did so he said, with a warm smile—

"You must be her guardian hereafter, and should you tire of the duty your Emperor will be ever ready to grant her the asylum she needs."

* * *

A week had passed away from the time of the strange scene just recorded. The former Duke, Olga, had been convicted of treason, and was now on his way to the eternal wilds of Siberia. But let me say here: He never reached the land of his banishment. His proud heart broke on the road, and he died, unknown and uncared for, in a peasant's cot among the rugged mountains of Uralia. He had begged of the officer who guided him not to tell his station, and the peasants supposed they were burying a common traveler when they laid away the mortal remains of Olga in the cold grave they had prepared.

Savotano, the hump-backed priest, was executed as a common murderer, while his companions in crime were punished as their various degrees of guilt demanded.

And now comes the closing scene.

Within the largest apartment of the ducal palace were assembled a brillant company, and the Emperor himself was master of the ceremonies.

Ruric Nevel, the Gunmaker of Moscow, knelt at the Emperor's feet; and Peter drew his sword and laid the glittering blade upon Ruric's shoulders. And as he did so he said,—

"Arise, Sir Ruric, Duke of Tula, and receive thy just titles and bonded instruments!"

The youth arose, pale and trembling with the strange excitement of the moment, and then the Emperor handed him a broad parchment roll, with its heavy seals and vignette bearing the arms of the Dukedom.

"Now," cried Peter, whose brow was flushed with the joy he himself was making, "let the rest of the work go on. Come, holy father, we need your help to perform the rest of the ceremony."

Ruric was pale no longer. As he felt the warm hand of Rosalind trembling within his own the rich blood mounted to his brow and temples, and in his dark eyes the strange love-light danced like reflected sunbeams.

The word was spoken—the bond of union was made—and, after all, Rosalind Valdai had become Duchess of Tula. The widowed mother was the first to bless them—and the Emperor came next. Then came Paul and Zenobie, hand in hand.

"Aha," spoke the happy Duchess, as she caught the new light of Zenobie's eye, and then turned to the glowing face of Paul, "you are playing at the game of love."

"You will not object," whispered the fair girl, hiding her face upon the bosom of her mistress.

"No, no, Zenobie."

"And you, my master," spoke Paul, gazing eagerly into Ruric's face,—"you will not say nay."

"No, no, my noble Paul. If you can win her you have my consent."

She was won already.

There was yet one more to come. Conrad Count Damonoff, somewhat pale and weak, but yet on the sure road to health, moved slowly forward and took the hand of the joyous bride. Then he reached forth the other hand and took the palm of Ruric, and as he thus held both their hands he said,—

"My lord and lady—and, I must say, my best friend,—let this moment atone for all of darkness between us in the past. Be you happy both—and may God bless you. Let me be accounted among your friends; and let the future prove how grateful I can be."

"Aye," cried Ruric, grasping the Count's hand more firmly, "let the future show how grateful we can all be for the blessings of this hour; and while we look to God for help we will not fail to remember in our prayers the author of our joys—our noble Emperor—Peter of Russia!"

And so closed the scene as it should—with one long, loud shout of—

"God bless our Emperor!"

Peter never forgot that moment. In the long years thereafter, when he sometimes let the clouds of passion settle upon his soul, he remembered that scene, and that shout. It was one of the bright spots in the memory of his youth which he cherished always.

THE END.

THE BATTLE OF BENNINGTON.

Not long since, we heard a couple of old men "talking over" the incidents of the battle of Bennington. "My father-in-law," said one of them, "was a Tory, and went with Lieutenant-Colonel Baum's Hessians, in July, 1777, when they marched, at General Burgoyne's command, to seize the American stores at Bennington. Baum was in a little fort, which he hastily threw up on the top of a hill, not far from Wallomsac River. Some call the battle the Battle of Hoosac, because it was in that town, and not in Bennington; and some call it the Battle of the Wallomsac."

"My father," said the other, "was in the same battle, but on the other side; and I have often heard him tell this story: Colonel Warner was very active in calling out the people of Berkshire county, in Massachusetts, when the alarm was given that the Hessians were coming; and the minister of the place where my father lived, marched off to Bennington, at the head of his deacons and parishioners. Early in the morning of July 16th, Colonel Warner told a large, athletic man, who was looking at his troops, to fall into the front ranks; but he replid that he was a wagoner, and had not come to fight. The colonel then turned, and addressed an old man, of small stature, with white and flowing hair, and said: 'The labors of the day are likely to be severe, and it is my request that you remain here as sentry over the baggage.' The aged man seemed at once to feel the animation of youth; and, quickly bringing his firelock to his shoulder, made a kind of hop forward, and exclaimed: 'Not till I have had one shot at them first!' This restored the feelings of the by-standers, which had been a little clouded by the cowardly speech which preceded, and the order to march was soon given.

"They were led with much caution, but as rapidly as possible, towards the Hessian fort, taking advantage of a narrow hollow, which led a part of the way in that direction, and effectually concealed them from the enemy. When my father reached the end of the ravine with his company, (for he was a captain, and had the head of the line,) he found himself at the foot of the fort, and saw soldiers above pointing their muskets at him. The next instant he fell, being shot with a musket-ball through the foot. He succeeded in gaining his standing; and on seeing, at a distance, a red-coat moving across a field, the thought occurred to him that he might encourage his men by a false report; and he cried out: 'They run! They run!' It had the desired effect. The militia rushed forward, climbed the hill and the wall of the fort, and the enemy turned and fled without any resistance."

"That is all true," said the first speaker. "I have heard my father-in-law tell the same story; and he used to add what I will now give you.

"'I ran,' said he, 'across the field behind the fort, but soon observed that I was followed by a tall Yankee, who seemed determined to overtake me. Both of our guns were unloaded, and of course of no use. I threw away mine, and began to gain on him. After a while he threw away his, and then he began to come up again. Looking back once more, I saw him kick off his shoes: but mine were buckled, and would not come off. Before me was a grove of trees, and I pushed on for it with all my might, hoping to find some kind of refuge from my pursuer. I did not observe that only the tops of the trees appeared, nor reflect that there must be a steep descent on this side. When I reached the spot, I discovered that it was the perpendicular bank of the Wallomsac river; and the next instant I felt myself falling down a great distance. *Pat!* came my feet into the deep, soft mud, on the edge of the stream; and there I stuck fast. *Pat!* came my pursuer right after me: for he also had been running at too swift a rate to check himself in time; and down he had come, and sunk into the mud almost within my reach. Had we been a little nearer, or had we kept our guns, we probably should have had a fight in that singular position. But we were just beyond each other's reach, and could not pick up even a stone or a stick to throw or strike with. We then began to make desperate struggles to extricate ourselves from the mud. He, I observed, seemed to work to no effect, while I felt my shoes loosen a little under my feet; and then I recollected that he was barefooted, and that my shoes might now give me some advantage. At length the straps of my old-fashioned buckles gave way, I drew up my feet, gained the hard ground, and ran down the bank, where I was soon out of sight among the bushes.'

"'I ran and walked till I was tired, then lay down and slept. When I awoke, I avoided every house and sign of habitation, and steered clear of the roads, until I was almost starved to death. The inhabitants were all Whigs, and great enemies of us Tories; and, fearing they would maltreat me, I dreaded the sight of anybody. At last I ventured to the house of a man I had known, who treated me kindly, fed and lodged me; but my face was so blackened by gunpowder, that it was some time before he recognized me. As soon as I was able, I slipped away, and soon found myself on the line of Burgoyne's march. Overtaking his army, I joined it, and was in the Tory fort on Bemis's Heights, in the Battle of Saratoga. It was on a knoll, the sides of which were covered with trees, which had been cut down and dragged there with all their branches to prevent the storming of the work. I had no idea that the Rebels would dare to come up in the face of our fire; but no sooner did they see us before them, than they ran toward us, clambered up among the old trees and over the branches, and were close upon us in a moment. I could compare their appearance to nothing better, than to say that the Yankees were as thick as hair on a dog. We did not wait long for them; they soon had the Tory fort all to themselves; and I was off the best way I could go, concluding I had had as much of the war as was, on the whole, best for me. The fact is, the Rebels had the right side of the quarrel, and *that* made them more than a match for us.'"

T. D.

CHANGES OF PURSUITS.

Everybody is apt to imagine somebody else's occupation easier than his own—to think his neighbor's "lot" luckier than his—to be tempted to rob him of it, perhaps, by supplantation.

This spirit of discontent is very unfortunate. It is worse. It is wicked as well as weak. As such it should be striven against with a hearty, and firmly-pronounced, "Get thee behind me, Satan!" The very entertainment of the thought is enervating—paralyzing—destructive of all that is worthy of the name of "success" in the present business of the entertainer. To accomplish anything, beyond what the common run of business or professional men perform, requires the utmost concentration of the mind on the matter in hand. There is no room, in the thoughts, for repinings over the misfortunes of one's lot, or wishes for an exchange of places with another. Indeed, it might be truthfully predicted that the indulgers of such wishes would fail, utterly, in the new sphere, could they get their wishes.

POOR KITTY'S FATE.

A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

BY AUGUSTA MOORE.

Once there was a little spotted kitten, that took it into her head to travel about and view the world. She was born in a farm-house, and when about five weeks old she was taken, with a wagon load of *other* young folks, down to another farm, situated on a lonely, but most romantic and beautiful strip of land, that was called "The Neck."

The good old people who owned "The Neck" having died, the farm was cared for by the heirs, and a merry time of it did sons and daughters, grandsons and grand-daughters make when haying time came. They used to load their great wagons with good things to eat, and with great girls and boys, and little girls and boys; and the fathers would take their rakes and pitchforks, and the mothers would take their babies, and down to the old homestead they would all of them go, in the most jolly manner imaginable. It was a pleasant way to work, so many friends all flying about together; and then it was pleasant eating and sleeping in the dear old house once more.

To the children the sport was perfectly glorious. No locked up parlors there—no carpets that must not be trodden on,—no sofas, or tables, or chairs to be driven off of. All was liberty, frolic and fun. The river was close by, and they could bathe or fish when they chose. Berries were plenty on every hand; there were lots of great trees to climb; and they didn't have to keep out of the dirt any more than they chose. It *was* delightful to live like the Indians, for a few days at a time, every year. And to this camping, not out, but in, Kitty, the kitty of our story, was taken. She was charmed at the scene, and frisked and scampered about the empty house like a little mad cat. The children had great sport with her. They were as much amused at her antics as at anything else. But they little thought what a turn for adventure this circumstance was giving their little, high-spirited favorite. This haying scrape was the commencement of Kitty's wanderings.

When the haying was over and the people all went home, Kitty was restless and dissatisfied. She would not stay in the house at all if she could help it, but sat out by the roadside, looking first this way and then that, as if watching for somebody.

The fact was, she wanted to get back again to "The Neck," and she didn't know which way to go to find it.

One evening, when it was almost dark, Kitty sat in her usual place by the side of the unfrequented road, and as she was just about falling into a nap, two ladies came along. Kitty knew them in a minute. She had seen them one day while she was at "The Neck," she thought they must be going there now, and she jumped quickly up and trotted after them.

"Do see that little mite of a kitten, following us just like a dog," said one of the ladies. They stopped and tried to drive Kitty back home, but she scampered on ahead of them so far that she was almost hidden by the fast-falling gloom of evening.

They at length approached a town, and began to meet a good many people; and Kitty grew rather confused in her ideas. "I'm afraid this is not the way to 'The Neck,' after all," she said to herself, stopping to consider. She saw a big dog on the other side of the road, and as she had rather an aversion to dogs she crept behind a fence to hide from him. When she came out she could see nothing of the two ladies.

"Oh! dear me! what shall I do now?" sighed the trembling truant; "I wish I was back home again."

But she did not know how to get back, so she ran hastily across the road, and into the front yard of a small white house, where she saw a little girl at a window. Kitty was very tired now; her little feet had trotted along over several miles. She was hungry also. Her nice saucer of foaming milk was awaiting her at home, but she was not there to taste it. Growler had to drink his own portion and Kitty's, too.

The little creature crept up into the door step and mewed piteously. A clergyman resided there who had never been rich enough to grow hard-hearted.

"Go open the door, Mary, and let that kitten in," he said to his little girl. Mary opened the door and called, "kitty, kitty, kitty."

"Why, you dear, pretty little thing!" she exclaimed as our small adventuress, nothing loath, ran softly in. "May I give her some of my milk for her supper?" asked the child.

"Certainly, my dear."

So Kitty did not go hungry to sleep.

The next day word was sent to Kitty's mistress that she had followed some ladies to the town and had taken refuge in the house of the minister.

She was soon returned home.

But as she ran away several times after this, her mistress concluded to give her to a neighbor who wanted a cat because the mice troubled her. But Kitty did not like this arrangement; and she ran away so often, and made such long journeys that her fame began to spread throughout that region, and there was quite a curiosity around to see the little traveling kitten. At length Kit came to the end of her adventures through the cruelty of some wicked boys. She was creeping on, one day, towards a bridge over which she hoped to pass unnoticed. She had come a long way that day, and was tired and hungry. Her little white paws were all soiled by the dust, and the white place on her soft breast was not so clean as usual. Kitty was afraid of the river, but she thought she *must* cross the bridge, for she wished to explore the other county. She thought she would go to some cottage and beg a drink of milk, and then sleep awhile in some barn, and then she would feel nicely refreshed. Thus comforting herself for fears, tired limbs, and sore feet, Kitty plodded on.

"Hurra, boys! here's a kitten—let's catch her, and have some fun." School was just out, and the whole hooting pack of boys came leaping forth, and in an instant the bewildered and terrified kitten was seized. Was there not *one* boy in all that crowd that had soul enough to save poor Kitty? Alas! not one. They—but the story is too disgraceful and too grievous to be told. Enough to say, poor Kitty's wanderings were over; her little, weary feet went up no more to rest in any friendly shelter; never again, along the road, or on the meadow's edge, or in the woods, did Kitty's innocent and pleasant face look up at the passer. Those wicked boys! they worried her to death, and threw her, mangled, and with her soft fur all torn and bloody, into the river—the rapid river which she had so feared.

Had this poor little kitty obeyed its kind mistress, and stayed at home, she would not have met with such a sad fate. Sometimes naughty children disobey their parents, and wander about, in a vagabond maner, as Kitty did; and often, like her, they meet with a violent or shameful death. *No child is safe from such dangers, that does not always obey its parents.*

AN honest old lady in the country, when told of her husband's death, exclaimed, "Well, I do declare, our troubles never come alone! It ain't a week since I lost my best hen, and now Mr. Hopper has gone, too, poor man!"

TO A DEAD BIRD.

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

"*But whither would conjecture stray.*"

Bird of the forest, beautiful and dead!
While in the twilight here I gaze on thee,
Strange fancies of the wild life that has fled,
Dimly and sadly gather over me.
Until, above thy still and silent sleep,
I can but bow my aching head and weep.

Alas, that when the spring-time's here to wake
The flowers and music of thy woodland halls,
Than whose glad voice so sweet a strain could make
In concert with the winds and water-falls—
In cold and hushed oblivion shouldst lie—
While things that suffer ask, in vain, to die!

But *wert* thou purely blest? Ah, who can tell
But Bird-land has its sorrows! It may be
That boundless love in thy wild breast did dwell
For some bright, winged thing—who flew from thee,
And left his scorn to pierce thy bleeding heart—
Till Death, in pity, drew away its dart!

Or thine, perchance, has been a perfect love,
(If *any* love can be without a sting!)
And thy lone mate may come to mourn alone
Thy blighted beauty, with a drooping wing,
Till, like all lonely mates, he seek relief—
In some new glory—for his transient grief!

Or thou mayst have been of a royal race!
And radiant throngs of minstrel-things to-day,
Ev'n in thine airy realm's remotest place,
May mourn—or joy—that thou hast past away!
For, gold and purple glitter on thy breast,
And thou art laid, right regally, to rest.

Was thy death tranquil? Or, amid the glare
Of Heaven's fierce fire-arms was thy being sped?
Or did some wing'd assassin of the air,
For hate—or envy—meet and strike thee dead
Was life still blushing with youth's rosy glow,
Or, worn and wearied, wert thou glad to go?

And was thy all of joy—or grief—on earth?
Or art thou gone to try thy wing anew
Where glorious roses have their perfumed birth—
And woods are ever green—skies ever blue—
And breezy music gushes rich and warm,
With not a sigh—*or whisper of the storm?*

Fit mausoleum is this hollow tree,
With faded leaves to pillow thy bright head,
And if such rest is all that's left for thee,
Methinks it is enough, sweet bird and dead!
For winds will sing and buds will burst above,
And I'll believe they left thee here in love!

A FOREST TRAGEDY.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

Horse-stealing, during the early settling of the Great West, was one of the means, if not of border warfare, at least of border annoyance, to both the whites and Indians. The Indians stole from the whites whenever they could, and in retaliation the whites frequently formed themselves into small parties and penetrated through the dense forests to the Indian towns for a like purpose. Sometimes these predatory parties were successful, and got off with their booty without molestation; but it frequently happened that they were pursued by the party wronged; and when overtaken, a fierce and bloody conflict was generally the result.

About the year 1791, or 1792, the settlers along the Ohio river, being sufferers in a great degree from the incursions of their forest neighbors, a small, intrepid band of hunters, or scouts, resolved to act upon the aggressive; and as their numbers were too few for venturing an attack upon the saveges at their towns, they decided upon the next best thing—the stealing and running off of as many horses as they could manage.

This party was composed of the best men that could be got together for such a daring, lawless purpose, but numbered only seven, all told. And yet these seven were all experienced hunters, trained from their very youth to a perfect familiarity with all the mysteries and perils of the forest—from the finding of their way to a given quarter, for a hundred miles, by signs only known to the practiced woodsman, to the rousing and killing of all the wild animals, and even more savage men—and regarded themselves as a company sufficiently strong for the purpose they had in view.

In fine spirits, therefore, they set out on their latest-planned expedition; and crossing the Ohio from the Virginia shore, they proceeded, with strong determination and due caution, to push their way through the almost unexplored forest, which stretched away for many a goodly league from the right bank of the river named.

Always keeping a subdued fire, if any, in their camp at night, and at least two of their number watching by turns, they penetrated far into the Indian country without meeting with any mishap, and at last found themselves in the vicinity of an Indian town, somewhere near the dividing ridge between the head-waters of the Muskingum and Sandusky rivers.

The Indians, being so far inland from the settlements of the whites, were not of course expecting such visitors, and were in consequence entirely off their guard; and the night following their arrival in the vicinity, our little band of adventurers stole cautiously around the outskirts of the town, and, getting in among the horses, succeeded in securing fourteen of the best, each man bridling and mounting one and leading another. These they managed to get away with little or no noise, and without attracting the notice of their enemies; and when they found themselves a couple of miles from the village, with neither sign of pursuit nor of their proximity having been discovered, it required all the caution and prudence which they had acquired in their long years of stern experience, to prevent them from congratulating themselves on their success by a series of hilarious shouts and yells. They did not ride fast through the night, for their present safety would not admit of it, however much a goodly distance from their enemies might have increased their security; but they kept their horses steadily in motion, in a southern direction, and anxiously watched for the coming dawn. Just before the break of day they halted, and hastily prepared their morning's meal; and then, with the return of light, they remounted and dashed away, believing that the Indians would now discover their loss, and probably set off in hot pursuit.

All through that anxious day they urged their animals through the thick, dark wood, at the utmost speed that could be accomplished, and only halted for their camp at night when they found, from the jaded condition of their horses, it would not be judicious to take them further without food and rest. Selecting a pleasant little dingle, through which flowed a tiny stream of pure water, and where luxurious grass and wild flowers proclaimed the fertility of the soil, they hoppled their horses and picketed them, and then starting a fire, they cooked their own supper, and ate it with the relish of hardy and hungry men.

Knowing that a goodly stretch of country now lay between them and the village where they had committed their depradations, our borderers had little fear of molestation; but they were not disposed to neglect all proper precautions, and two of their number remained on guard through the night, which passed off without disturbance.

At an early hour the next morning they again set forward, in fine spirits, and rode hard all day, reaching about nightfall an excellent camping-ground on the right of Will's Creek, in the present county of Guernsey, Ohio, and near the site of the present town of Cambridge. Here one of the most active of the party, one William Linn, complained of violent pains and cramps in his stomach, and declared himself unable to ride another mile. A halt for the night was accordingly decided on; but for some cause, which not a man of the company could rationally explain, all regarded this camp as more dangerous than the one of the night preceding; and the extra precautions were taken of placing three sentinels at different intervals on the back trail, to keep a sharp look-out for pursuers; while the other three, who were well, should prepare their evening meal, and minister to the sick man as best lay in their power.

Such simple remedies as they chanced to have with them were given to Mr. Linn, but without producing any favorable result; in fact, he gradually grew worse instead of better; and his pains at times became so excrutiating as to compel him to screech out in tones that could be heard afar through the dreary solitude of the gloomy forest. Rough, hardened, and unrefined, as were the companions of the sick man, they were men of heart, and not devoid of sympathy for a suffering fellow-being, and they did what they could to aid, cheer, and console him, cautioning him at the same time to suppress, if possible, his cries of agony, lest the sounds should reach pursuing or out-lying foes, and bring destruction upon all.

The three at the camp having refreshed themselves by a frugal but hearty meal, they immediately relieved the three sentinels, who proceeded to do the same; after which, toward midnight, the whole party collected together, and held a consultation upon the supposed danger. As they had seen no Indians since quitting their village, some forty-eight hours previously, and no signs of any during their present watch, and as it was now waxing late into the night, and no trail could be easily followed after dark, it was thought that no apprehension of an attack need be felt; and that with one man to stand guard and wait upon the suffering Mr. Linn, the rest might camp down in safety and get a few hours of needful rest. The party to act as sentinel was decided by lot, and fell upon one William McCollough, a cool, brave, intrepid Indian hunter, who subsequently rose to the command of a company in the war of 1812, and fell at the battle of Brownstown in Hull's campaign.

The immediate camp of our adventurers was on a small branch of Will's Creek; and around the cheerful fire there kindled, five weary men lay down to snatch a few hours of repose, and were soon fast asleep—Linn and McCollough only remaining awake—the former wrapped in his blanket and stretched on the ground between the fire and water, rolling and groaning with pain—and the latter stationed on the edge of a thicket, just beyond the reach of the firelight, where he could best see about him, and be ready to give instant alarm at the first approach of danger.

In this position of affairs some three or four hours passed away; the only sounds that broke the solemn stillness being the slight movement of some of the horses picketed near, the dismal hooting of an owl, the distant howling of a wolf, and the occasional groaning of the sufferer, with perhaps the exchange of a few words between him and the sentinel—the fire, meantime, burning gradually down, and, in its dying flickers, throwing strange, fantastic shadows over the quiet scene.

At length, a little before the break of day, Mr. Linn, with a louder groan than usual, and a sharp cry of pain, raised himself upon his elbow, and exclaimed:

"Oh, my God! my God! I can't stand this no longer—every breath I draw is killing me. Here, Bill—quick! let me try one thing more—some hot salt and water—and if that thar don't help me, may Heaven have mercy on my poor, sinful soul! Take my cup here," he added, somewhat gaspingly, as McCollough stepped hastily forward, "and heat me some water, with a handful of salt in't, and let me try that. Quick! quick! for God's sake! for I'm in the agonies of death!"

McCollough seized the cup alluded to, and, running to the water, only a few feet distant, filled it, and hastened back to the dying fire; but as he stooped down and raked some coals together, for the purpose of heating it, he suddenly discovered, with a feeling of considerable uneasiness, if not alarm, that the water in the vessel was unusually muddy.

"Excuse me, Linn!" he said, starting hastily to his feet, and glancing quickly and suspiciously around him; "but I'm afeard all the rest o' us is in danger as well as you."

"Ha! what's the matter?" asked Linn.

"So'thing's muddied this water, by gitting into it; and that so'thing, I'm afeard, is Injuns!"

"Better call up the boys, and git their opinions, and, if thar's danger, have 'em ready for it!" returned Linn, with a groan of blended fear and pain.

Linn had not ceased speaking, ere McCollough was actively carrying out his suggestion; and the five heavy sleepers were suddenly roused, each with a vigorous shake, and the single word "*danger*," which was communicated in a low but ominous tone to the sense of hearing. As one after another they started up, with expressions of alarm, and instinctively grasped their weapons, McCollough exclaimed, with a warning gesture:

"Hist! boys—keep quiet—don't make a noise! It's eyther nothing, or thar's trouble about; but don't let's draw it on to us by child's play."

He then went on to state what he had discovered, and what were his suspicions; and as soon as he had finished, the opinion of his comrades was quickly and unanimously given, that the "sign" justified a belief in danger, and that he had done right in waking and putting them on their guard, and that prudence demanded a careful search, which they forthwith proceeded to make.

Separating themselves, and quickly gliding away beyond the fire-light, they stealthily approached the bank of the little stream, and passed up and down it for several rods, listening to the faintest sound, and peering cautiously into the darkness; but, unfortunately for them, as the sequel will show, neither hearing nor perceiving aught to justify a belief in the proximity of savage foes. When they had all again collected together, one of the party said, addressing McCollough:

"Bill, you're ginerally purty sure on Injun sign; but I'll lay one of my captur'd hosses agin yourn, you've made a mistake this time."

"Bill did right in waking us, though," said another, "for thar mought have been Injuns about, and we lost all our top-knots."

"And thar may be yit, for what you know, Tom," rejoined McCollough; "for so'thing above has riled the water, and it's jest as like to be Injuns as anything else; and the fact that we haint found 'em, don't prove they arn't thar even now; eh! Joe Hedges? what say you?"

"Wall, it's my opine, Bill, that the water's eyther been riled from raccoons, ducks, or some other animal, and that we mought as well turn down agin and sleep till daylight. I'll guarantee the camp for a quart of whiskey."

This reply was greeted by a laugh from all save McCollough and Linn; and after a few words with the latter, expressive of a kind of rude sympathy for his sufferings, the five men, who had been so suddenly roused by the guard, again stretched themselves around the fire, and were soon as fast asleep as before—McCollough, meantime, proceeding to heat the salt and water and administer it to the sufferer—who, immediately after taking it, said he felt a little easier, and thought he should be able to get some rest at last.

An hour later, as McCollough stood at his former post, somewhat abstractedly gazing at the few red embers, which were all that now remained of the smoldering fire, a slight, a very slight, noise, on the bank of the little stream, attracted his attention. He looked up suddenly and with a start; but before he had time for action, there flashed upon his astonished vision a line of fire, followed instantly by a dozen sharp reports, by groans and cries of pain from his companions, and by loud, fierce whoops and yells from a large body of savages, who had silently stolen down the bed of the stream and now came bounding forward for the destruction of their enemies.

McCollough was himself untouched by the fire of the Indians; but he saw that some of his companions, including poor Linn, were badly wounded; and knowing that his own life would solely depend upon his successfull flight into and through the forest, he instantly turned and bounded away with all his might, several of the savages perceiving and bounding after him with wild and fearful yells.

Now it so happened that the party who gave chase to McCollough, had not yet discharged their pieces; and finding he was likely to escape them in the darkness, they suddenly drew up in a line and poured a close volley after him. But at the very instant they fired, his foot struck the bog of a quagmire, and he pitched headlong upon the soft morass; whereupon his enemies, seeing him suddenly disappear and believing him dead or mortally wounded, gave a few whoops of triumphs, and turned off in pursuit of the others, three of whom were also making good their flight.

As soon as his enemies were out of hearing, McCollough cautiously worked his way out of the treacherous morass, and then set off, afoot and alone, to make his way out through the dreary wilderness to the nearest station, thankful that even his life was spared. In his first flight he had thrown away his gun, and had now only his hunting-knife; and being without provisions and the means of procuring any, he foresaw much suffering for himself, even if he escaped with life. But suffering through privation, was seldom a matter to be treated seriously by the bold borderer; and McCollough, even when compelled to hunt for roots and berries, to keep himself from perishing by starvation, did so with a light heart, thinking only how happy he was at his wonderful escape from his savage foes.

The next day, to his great surprise, for he believed all the others killed, he fell in with John Hough, one of his companions, and the two continued their journey together, and reached Wheeling in safety, where they reported their misfortunes and the loss of their companions. But even yet they were destined to an agreeable surprise; for the day following their own arrival, two more of their comrades, Kinzie Dickerson and John Whetzel, made their appearance, naked and nearly famished. These two had also met on their retreat, and had struggled through the fearful journey together.

The unexpected meeting of these four, for a time led them to hope that, in some almost miraculous manner, some of the others might have escaped also—but they hoped in vain. William Linn, Thomas Biggs, and Joseph Hedges, were all killed in and near the fatal camp; and here their horribly mutilated bodies were found and decently buried, by a party from Wheeling who went out in search of them.

The four who escaped lived many years to tell the tale we have recorded, and take an active part in other wild border scenes and tragedies; but all are now dead—all went long since through the Dark Valley to the so-called Land of Shadows.

NATURAL MAGIC.

BY JOSEPH BARBER.

The seasons are magicians. Gleeful Spring
Wakes in their graves the vegetable dead,
And guided upward by her tuneful voice
They struggle to the sunlight. Summer next
Opens the roses, and the swelling fruit
Fills with voluptuous ripeness. Bearded fields
Grow golden in her smile, and happy birds
Thank her in choral hymns for garlanding
Their sylvan coverts. Autumn with a breath
Purples the clustered bubbles of the vine,
And to a wonder turns the forest leaves,
Making decay magnificent!
At last
Stern Winter comes—the Merlin of the year.
Spring, Summer, Autumn, with slow working spells,
Their tasks accomplish. Winter in a day
Transfigures Nature: in a single night
Bridges a thousand streams, and challenging
The rushing surges of the cataract,
Arrests them on the leap! He shakes the clouds
And Earth is whitened; from the wild north east
Launches the ice-storms, when the world's asleep,
To make the woods resplendent and the leaves
To fringe with pendant crystals. All is done
Not by progression slow as fruits mature
And waving harvests ripen, but at once.
Therefore, among the seasons be thou King,
Cyclopean Winter! The wide universe,
Nor builder, brightener nor destroyer hath
Swift-handed as thyself.

GUAYAQUIL.

BY AN OLD SAILOR.

I led a wandering life when a young man, spending most of my time at sea, and occasionally "taking my land-tacks" aboard, in staying awhile in some foreign city, or on some island, where I happened to be thrown. I left a vessel in which I had sailed awhile in the Pacific Ocean, and found my way to the city of Guayaquil, by going in a boat, up the small river of that name, through the forests which overshadow its low banks, to where that town was built, in no very inviting position.

Being without money or acquaintances, I turned in my mind the question—"How can I get a living?" The weather was mild and inviting in the morning; and I took a solitary stroll about the town, and then a short distance into the country. At a turn in the road I discovered the most beautiful tree I had ever seen. I stopped to admire it. It was very tall, spreading, uniform in shape on all sides, with graceful branches, and a thick and bright foliage, formed of the most delicate leaves, intermingled with clusters of long pods, so arranged as to form altogether an appearance peculiarly pleasing. It was a Tamarind-tree; and I became well acquainted with it afterwards; and it will always be associated in my mind with the memory of some agreeable scenes, and a number of simple-hearted but sincere friends, who dwelt under its shadow. While walking about it, to view it more closely, I discovered a rude hut among the bushes, consisting of a large thatched roof supported by high poles, and an elevated platform beneath it, which I found was one of the common habitations of the country-people in that part of the Republic of Ecuador, only two or three degrees south of the Equator.

A dark-complexioned man approached, and invited me to enter and seat myself. He spoke a language of which I could understand only a few words; but his animated and natural gestures, and the kind expression of his countenance, greatly assisted in explaining his meaning, and I was not slow in signifying my assent. He mounted to the platform, by climbing up one of the poles by which it was supported, with the aid of a row of deep notches cut into the wood, to serve as stairs; and I followed with alacrity, not only because I was used to going up masts by shrouds and ropes, but because I smelt the savory fumes of a dish which was cooking over a fire near by, and recollected that I had fasted many hours, without any previous prospect of finding a dinner that day. Sitting down, under the shade of the roof, in a fine breeze which was blowing, I there found a welcome, from one of the simplest families which it has ever been my fortune to know. The father, mother and children received me with kindness; and I enjoyed the food they shared with me with an extraordinary relish.

I soon saw clearly that I was in no danger of suffering from want, in that warm and luxuriant country, in which my lot had been cast, at least for a few weeks, or more probably months. Plantain-trees stood near at hand, loaded with fruit, some of which I was eating; several other plants which I saw seemed to bear what might be food; birds were numerous among the trees, and a large flock of domestic fowls were cackling, crowing and clucking under their shade. Eggs, also, I saw were abundant; and, as I had seen a stream not far off, I presumed that fish might easily be obtained, if those contented people ever desired to increase their variety.

When I rose to depart, my new friends urged me to remain; and, as I plainly saw that they were sincere, and that they considered it a pleasure to have a stranger among them, while I foresaw that I should cause them neither expense nor inconvenience, I consented. It must seem strange to the inhabitant of a more northern country, to learn that in those native houses, called Tambos, the air freely enters and passes through, at all hours of the day and night, and every season of the year. As I mentioned before, the thatched roof covered the little rude platform; but it nowhere came down so as to touch the floors. There we laid ourselves, when ready for repose, and there I slept sweetly till morning. The sounds of fowls and the songs of birds were then heard; the air was somewhat cooled by the night; the light came on brighter and brighter; I partook of a good breakfast; and then, with many invitations to return and visit them often, I walked back to Guayaquil.

Strolling through the streets, I observed little stalls or shops, where various articles were sold; and, on inquiring the prices of some, was astonished at the extravagant demands. Not to speak of the few objects which were foreign, the products of the country, and even of the neighborhood, were held at five and sometimes ten times their value. Eggs were a real, or twelve cents each; and fowls, meat, vegetables and fruits nearly in proportion. In the course of my walk I met a gentleman, who asked me a few questions, and then kindly invited me to accompany him to his house, saying he was an inhabitant, an old merchant, although a foreigner, and that, as he perceived I was a stranger, I might wish to form an acquaintance. The result of the conversation we had together at his house was, that I became his major-domo, and was soon engaged in the oversight of his domestic affairs. He had formed an opinion of my skill in marketing from what he had heard and observed of my movements among the hucksters; and I was happy to prove to him, by my economical arrangements, that his purse would be benefitted by the confidence he had placed in me, and the essential favor he had done me in time of great need.

He was fond of eggs, cooked in various forms; and had been accustomed to pay extravagantly for them. I paid an early visit to my Indian friends, and ascertained that they were willing to supply me with eggs at a very low price, indeed for nothing. But I chose to make a bargain for a considerable number, at particular days of the week, at a price which they thought almost unreasonably high, if I would call and take them myself. I hinted at their carrying them to the house of the merchant; but this they decidedly declined—for what reason I never could imagine, unless that they never had done such a thing, and were either too proud or too indolent to listen to the proposal. I thus discovered the cause of the high prices for country products in Guayaquil. The people in the neighborhood would not carry them to market, and therefore they were scarce and high. I made my pilgrimage frequently to visit my dark-faced friends for two good reasons: my employer's interest and my own gratification.

But the cholera broke out in Guayaquil. That dreadful disease spread like wildfire, carrying desolation and panic through the city. Sick and dying were seen in almost every house; and, as I passed through the streets and looked in at the doors, I saw sights which I could not endure. I asked my employer to give me me time to help the sufferers, and he consented. I was impelled by an extraordinary feeling, which I cannot fully describe or account for; and I was by the side of the sick for weeks, until there was no longer any need of my services. What I witnessed I shall make no attempt to say. My memory is full of watchings and labors, now in this part of the city, now in that; among the poor and the rich, whom I often found in one wretched state of suffering and neglect.

The disease at length subsided; my own friends were safe; and circumstances soon after occurred which removed me from Guayaquil, and threw me once more upon the life of a wanderer.

WHAT'S A CRITIC?

What's a critic? It is a snarling, envious creature, that cannot itself do anything worth commendation, and so mortally hates to have any one else do it. It is a being whose *profession* is to shut its eyes to every good thing in a work under its notice; whose *aim in life* (not to say whose *joy* in life) is *to find fault*, and *to pick to pieces*,—a very literal creature, with an imagination like a clam, and a range of ideas equal to the circumference of a peck measure; a most sour, dyspeptic, unwholesome biped, who, in a garden of roses, will smell nought but angle-worms, and see only caterpillars. Unfortunate wretches! *what* a place their mental house must be. Filled only with distorted images and unpleasing pictures, who but themselves could abide in such a place? Constantly employed in hunting for something to growl over; contradicting those who know better than they do; quarrelling with what they do not understand; presuming to make corrections in matters about which they know nothing, and to add suggestions that are villanously inappropriate. Critics may be emphatically styled "small potatoes," and the more of them there are in a hill the worse is it for the ground that bears them.

But they have their use, and authors ought to be thankful for the race. To be sure, critics live for the express purpose of cutting up the works of authors; but what of it? Books are very much like seed potatoes, the more you cut them up the more you gain from them. S.

[In justice to the poor critics, we must say that the above was written just after the author thereof had been severely "cut up" by one of the fraternity.—Ed. Ledger.]

A few evenings ago, a little boy sat looking in silence at the stars, as they come forth with the shade of night. At length he spoke to his father, who sat near him, and asked, "*Pa, are not the Stars the Angels' eyes?*" This question from a child of four years old, embodies a sublimity of poetic thought, which few gray heads would conceive.

Keep aloof from quarrels; be neither a witness nor a party.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER
BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

Time wears slippers of list, and his tread is noiseless. The days come, Indian-file, softly dawning one after another; they creep in at the windows; their fresh morning air is grateful to the lips that part for it; their music is sweet to the ears that listen to it; until, before we know it, a whole life of days has possession of the citadel, and time has taken us for its own.

In all affairs of honor, so called, except where the sole motive is revenge, it is curious that fear is the main ingredient. From fear men accept a challenge; and from fear they refuse it. From the false fear of opinion they enter the lists; or they decline from the physical fear of danger or the moral fear of guilt.

Nature has strange ways of doing the most beautiful things. Out of the oozy earth, the mud and rain of early Spring, come the most delicate of flowers, their white leaves born out of the dirt, as unsoiled and pure as if they had bloomed in the garden of Paradise.

A Western hunter recently shot three times at a wolf a hundred yards off, while the wolf sat and howled at him. He complains that he didn't have an even chance; he fired off-hand, while the wolf took a rest—on his tail.

It is easier to still the wave of fashion than to break the dead sea of indifference, which, like the Lake Asphaltes, destroys the energies of all that approach it, until, like the birds that are said to drop lifeless on its dull surface, the heart sinks to rise no more.

A quill has been defined by somebody as an instrument taken from the pinion of one goose to spread the opinions of the other. We may add that the gabble of the first goose is very often more tolerable than that of the second.

Napoleon was not so extravagant as many people imagine when he declared that in modern times "bayonets think." Is it not evident that every polished bayonet is capable of *reflection?*

Selfishness sometimes works well. If Eve had only eaten the whole apple instead of sharing it with Adam, human nature would have been evil only on the mother's side.

An Englishman has just published a book, advising all men to "mind only their own business." Why doesn't *he* mind *his*, instead of telling other people what to do?

Deliver us from temptation is a petition less dwelt upon than give us our daily bread, and yet, without such deliverance, the bread is not worth praying for.

Biography waits on Death. The richer the harvest in "God's Acre," the more and the brighter are the tears of the Muse, and the fairer the page she indites.

It costs men a great deal of trouble to exhibit constant ill-nature, and they don't make anything by it. Why should they be such fools as to work for nothing?

Dr. Johnson says, "Good actions are never lost or thrown away." That is probably the reason one so seldom meets with them.

A man is not so likely to deserve or win the blessing of his children by giving them much as by teaching them how to live on little.

All our Arctic explorers have enjoyed one important advantage; in their deadliest perils they always kept cool.

"Husband, I must have some change, to-day." "Well, stay at home and take care of the children—that will be change enough."

"I haven't another word to say, wife—I never dispute with fools." "No, husband, you are very sure to agree with them."

An American writer says that asses are the most villified of all animals. We believe that foxes are the most run down.

Position is something, but not everything. The eyes are in the rear of the nose, but can see much further than it can smell.

About the only person we ever heard of, that wasn't spoiled by being lionized, was a Jew named Daniel.

If "all the world's a stage," many a chap of our acquaintance would like mightily to be the stage-driver.

Scrutinize a lawyer closely when he advises you to avoid litigation, and a doctor when he drinks your health.

A fellow, that blames the Devil for all his own misdeeds, shows a deplorable lack of filial regard.

Those who go to law for damages are pretty sure to get them.

A man had better need alms than be too mean to bestow them.

Many a man keeps on drinking till he hasn't a coat to either his back or his stomach.

"How does real-estate sell in your town?" "Oh, it's as cheap as dirt."

In these hard times "many a good tall fellow" is always "*short.*"

It generally costs little to get a wife, but often a ruinous amount to keep her.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A fashionable lady, arrayed in the greatest amplitude of crinoline, recently went walking with a little son four years of age. All of a sudden she missed the little fellow, and could get no glimpse of him. Her cries of distress soon gathered a sympathizing crowd around her; messengers were dispatched in every direction, and the lady walked slowly and sadly home. As she began to ascend the steps of her mansion a tiny voice exclaimed, "Hold on, ma! let me out!" The little rascal was under her lattice-work skirt.

A company of fifteen young men on their way to Pike's Peak were arrested at London, Canada West, a short time since, on the supposition that they were a gang of counterfeiters; they were also looked upon as desperadoes, as they were each armed with a rifle, two revolvers and a bowie-knife. The officers who arrested them got much praise for their "gallantry" until the true state of the case was discovered, when, of course, the praise was turned to ridicule and condemnation.

A beautiful young lady, the daughter of one of the most distinguished citizens of Florida, recently attempted to shoot the wife of the Mayor of Pensacola, who had supplanted her in the affections of, and married, that gentleman. She missed her aim, and the mayoress bravely rushed upon her and wrested the pistol from her grasp, whereupon the infatuated girl drew a dagger and succeeded in inflicting a slight wound upon her intended victim, before she could be disarmed.

An Ohio paper says there is an Austrian exile in Cleveland, in that State, who, though in "destitute circumstances," has a diamond brooch worth five thousand dollars, which he will not part with because it has been in his family over a hundred years. If he does not keep it close, some light-fingered gentleman may get hold of it who will not entertain any such reverential family scruples in regard to making immediate practical use of the jewel.

A lady in Brooklyn recently requested a servant to carry a pitcher of water upstairs, which she proceeded to do. On getting part way up, she sat the pitcher down, and a little boy of the family, six years old, who was passing, accidentally upset it; whereupon the girl threw the pitcher at him and hit him on the head with such force as to fracture his skull; and it is thought that he cannot recover.

A young man living in Rochester, N. Y., who was addicted to drunkenness, being unable to get any liquor one evening because his brother had cautioned the dealers against selling to him, drank a lot of pure alcohol which he had in his shop, and then stepped into a drug-store, bought a quantity of opium, eat it, went home, lay down upon his bed, and died in a few hours.

A thief in a western city was recently indicted for stealing two dun-colored oxen and one white cow; but on the trial it was proved that the cow was red and the oxen dark-colored with white spots, so the thief was discharged. The populace, however, gave him a coat of tar and placing him on the back of one of the stolen oxen, rode him out of town.

A woman who kept a "house of call" for rowdies in Columbus, Ohio, recently shot a man named Ruprecht, who insisted on being admitted after midnight. The first time the cap exploded on the pistol, when she deliberately exchanged it for another weapon and shot the unfortunate man dead.

A wealthy gentleman of South Carolina, who recently died, cut off his family with a mere pittance and gave two hundred thousand dollars to a religious society. The heirs have determined to "break the will, if there is law enough in the State to do it."

A young lady in Troy, N. Y., had her ears pierced, and placed in them colored worsted, from the effects of which she died. The "authorities" say that no danger can arise from piercing the ears, provided silk, or silver wire, be placed in the orifices.

GOD IN NATURE.

BY ALICE CARY.

My God, I feel thy wondrous might
In nature's various shows—
The whirlwind's breath—the tender light
Of the rejoicing rose.

For doth not that same power enfold
Whatever things are new,
Which shone about the Saints of old
And struck the seas in two.

Ashamed, I veil my fearful eyes
From this, thy earthly reign—
What shall I do when I arise
From death, but die again!

What shall I do but prostrate fall
Before the splendor there,
That here, so dazzles me through all
The dusty robes I wear.

Life's outward and material laws—
Love, sunshine, all things bright,
Are curtains which thy mercy draws
To shield us from that light.

I falter when I try to seek
The world which these conceal—
I stammer when I fain would speak
The reverence that I feel.

I dare not pray to thee to give
That heaven which shall appear—
My cry is, help me, thou, to live
Within the heaven that's here.

THE BARRANCA;

OR,

JACK HOLLISTER'S STORY.

"Well, boys," said Jack, as the Rangers gathered around our camp-fire, after a day's march, "you all know the Santa Fe Expedition started from Austin in the spring of '41.

"President Lamar originated it, and directed its departure, and the brave old Indian fighter, Col. Cooke, was to assume its command. I knew nothing more about it, than that it would be a good chance to visit a portion of the unexplored country beyond the *Slaño Estacado*, a portion of country I much desired to see.

"Sam Roberts, here, Mat Small and myself joined the expedition together. Mat was a regular specimen. He was one of the most ungainly, misshapen, lazy-looking lubbers I ever met with, but I tell you he was true grit when you found him out. He was as strong as a grizzly bear, and could run like a deer, anywhere on smooth ground; but give him the advantage of broken ground on a hog-wallow prairie, and them long, crooked legs of his could outrun anything almost with four legs—that is, on a long heat. Mat had not his match in the party with a rifle; he could plug the centre more times in a hundred shots, than any other man in Texas. On 'Indian signs,' and tracking game, he never had his equal anywhere. He had been a prisoner among the Kioways, and had learned all their prairie craft and strategy, and knew every league of country between the Brazos and the head waters of the Rio Grande. With all these backwoods accomplishments, Mat Small was one of the best, warmest-hearted fellows in the world. A better man never spread blanket at camp-fire; and what was the most singular thing about him was, that though he was brave, and, of course, generous to a fault, almost, he was the only person of his acquaintance who was not willing to acknowledge it.

"As I said, Sam, Mat and I joined the expedition together, at Austin, with the understanding that we should mess together, and not be subject to military duty, but to act as guides and hunters to the party, and if need be, occasionally to serve as spies, and make reconnoissances in the Indian country.

"Well, we were some months on the journey towards New Mexico; sometimes getting along well enough, and at other times suffering for food and water for ourselves, as well as for our animals. We hunters and prairie men could have got along well enough. We could have gone anywhere, and always found abundance to eat, so long as our ammunition held out. But it was difficult with a large party of men.

"The command started out with a good wagon train, and a large supply of commissary stores, besides a drove of cattle for subsistence, but these could not last always. A scarcity of grass and water soon diminished the last, which were left along the trail in too poor condition to drive. All the hunters were continually on the lookout for game, and occasionally large herds of buffaloes were encountered, when a halt would be ordered, and all hands turn to killing, skinning, and jerking the meat. This God-send would last the party but a few days, when we would again be thrown upon short rations, and a shift for a new supply of provisions. Sometimes, a lack of food, grass and water would also fail us, and then our situation became truly distressing.

"On one occasion, after we had passed beyond the head waters of the Wichita, to the east of the hills which enclose the great elevated basin of the *Slaño Estacado* (staked plain), the command halted to recruit the stock upon the fine mezquit grass, on which they feasted with hungry avidity. There was also at this place an abundance of water, and as a matter of course there were buffaloes in the vicinity, for they are always sure to be found where the range is best. I was at the head waters of the Wichita several times, and had trapped it, and dodged Camanches and Kioways there, for months at a time. I offered my services as a guide so far as I knew the country, and to accompany them the whole route. Col. Cooke gladly accepted me, as he said he required more experienced hunters than he had already engaged.

"As Sam Roberts, Mat and myself were saddling up one morning, to start upon the day's hunt, Col. Cooke sent for me to his tent. He wanted some one to explore the country in the direction of the head waters of the Red River, and find a pass through the hills bordering on what was called the *Slaño Estacado*, or staked plain. It was soon arranged that Sam, Mat and I should go, and go we did—and so did the extra water we had taken along in our gourds, and we and our horses began to suffer.

"We had sighted the Wichita hills on the third day, and expected to find water somewhere among the ravines at their base. We therefore turned a little from our direct course to reach them the sooner. At length, while we were yet two or three miles from the mountains, we found ourselves upon the edge of one of those deep *barrancas*, or gullies, which we were looking for, a thousand feet deep, and nearly the same across. It made our brains dizzy to look down into its dark interior. It was like gazing into the very heart of the old earth. But in the wild and narrow cañon below, we saw what, at that moment, robbed the place of all its gloomy features, for far down there, our eyes were delighted with an occasional spot of green grass, and the glimmer of *water* reflected the straggling rays of light, which found their way down into the abyss.

"A wild stream, which had struggled in its tortuous course from the hills, was stealing through the barranca; and as we followed up its dangerous brink, our sight was gladdened with occasional glimpses of the pure element, as it lept among the rocks, and foamed along its broken way, or tumbling over a ragged cascade, sent up to our greedy ears the sweetest music that ever cheered the thirsty traveller of the plains.

"But after wandering for several hours up the ravine, searching in vain for a path descending to the tantalizing stream, our thirst became unendurable from the sight of it.

"We were satisfied that there must be a trail somewhere, leading into, and out of the barranca on the other side. We therefore continued along the brink, till Sam Roberts, who was riding a little way ahead, at length shouted out the cheering cry of—"a trail, boys,—I see a trail!"

"It was now late in the afternoon, and at the best, we would have little enough time to reach the water, before night would be upon us. It was necessary before entering the barranca with our horses to reconnoitre the descent, to ascertain if it was yet practicable for them; for occasionally gullying showers destroy these descending paths, which have been safely travelled for years before. We therefore dismounted, and having staked out our horses, started onward to examine the trail.

"Mat now took the lead; but he had not reached the path, which lay before us, a wide, hard beaten road, before he stopped suddenly with an impatient exclamation—'Boys, it's just as I expected!'

'"Why! what's up now? What's the matter, Mat?' we both inquired, as we run up to where he had halted.

"'Matter enough. I reckon that bright water down there,'—pointing towards the barranca—'won't quench our burning throats this night, boys! Don't you see them Injun signs?—a party of infernal Kioways have passed down not an hour ago;' and stepping into the trail, and examining the ground, he continued—"there's over fifty of 'em; and of course, they'll camp on the trail, in the barranca, to-night. The darned varmints are too many for us, I reckon. But then, what can we do without water? Now what do you say to going down, and helping ourselves, anyhow?'

"'But Mat,' I suggested, 'wouldn't it be best to reconnoitre the place first? Perhaps we might approach the water without being discovered by them red devils, and fill our gourds.'

"'Well, we'll try it,' returned Mat. 'But water I *must have*, at some rate, or burst. I don't believe I could last through the night without it; augh! my throat's like a burnt prairie at mid-day in August.'

"Sam Roberts was of the same opinion as myself. He thought there might be a chance to reach the water, and return to the top of the bank without exciting the attention of the Indians. At all events, we could approach them cautiously, and if a fight was inevitable, we would have greatly the advantage of them, in arms and position, among the rocks above where they would probably be encamped. So recharging our rifles, putting fresh caps to our revolvers, and slinging our gourds over our shoulders, we commenced the descent.

"Mat led the way down the circuitous path. Stretched by the margin of the stream, and directly between the foot of the trail and the water, were some thirty or forty Kioways; while about a dozen squaws were kindling little fires of 'buffalo chips,' preparatory to cooking their suppers.

"We came in sight of the savages without being perceived by them; but it was impossible to approach the water without passing over their prostrate forms.

"In this not unlooked for emergency, we halted for another council of war.

"Sam proposed that we should wait till the shadows of night should fall into the ravine, when in the darkness, we might descend among the Indians unsuspected, and remain long enough to get a good drink and fill our water gourds. But to this, Mat Small objected. He knew the habits of Indians too well; for as I have already stated, he had been long time a prisoner with the same tribe, of which this party was a portion.

"'No, no! boys,' whispered he, 'the first thing the rascals will do as soon as it gets dark, will be to place a sentry up here on the trail; and he would give the alarm before we could dispatch him. I'm in for a fight, anyhow, with the blasted varments. I reckon we can make them take cover long enough to fill our gourds,—and then, who cares for them. They aint such darned fools, as to attempt to follow us up the trail. So here's the first music of *this* fandango!'

"And before I could interfere to prevent it, Mat levelled his rifle upon the head of a stalwart savage, sitting in the centre of the trail, and fired. We heard the bullet thud through his brain; and as the Indian stretched his lifeless length along the path, there rose from the ravine a wild, fierce yell of mingled terror, surprise and vengeance. Each savage sprang instantly to his feet, and caught his weapons,—at the same moment gazing wildly about him, ignorant as yet, from whence came the deadly messenger.

"'Now boys,' whispered Mat, as he recharged his rifle, 'give them one of your revolvers each, that they mayn't reckon right about our numbers; but don't waste a single shot; take an Injun at every pop, and keep at the firing for a minute or two, and when they scatter, one of us will make a break for the water;—*fire!*'

"Sam and I followed his instructions to the letter; and rattled the lead among the Indians in rapid succession. This had the effect that Mat expected; for the numerous reports, and the dead and wounded savages that fell from the discharge, confused them, and made them suppose they were attacked by a large force. They snatched up their wounded comrades, and withdrew to a safer position, among the broken gullies, on the farther side of the little stream.

"At this moment, Sam Roberts gathered up the water gourds, and bounding down the declivity, reached the water. But as he was in the act of drinking, with his body stretched along the grass, three tall Indians sprang upon him with a fierce yell, and attacked him with their long knives. Our brave fellow, however, was too quick for them. With his revolver he did the job for two of them; and Mat, with his rifle fixed the third.

"This little matter disposed of, Sam deliberately proceeded to fill his gourds, as cooly as if there were no Indians in the barranca. But again an overwhelming force of the savages returned to the attack, after first discharging a shower of arrows. But Sam again stretched at length in the grass, escaped the whizzing shafts; and as they leaped across the stream, he received them with his other revolver and knife.

"'I must have a hand there!' shouted Mat. 'Keep your position, Jack, to cover us, when we fall back;' and with two or three jumps he rushed to the support of our brave comrade. Both of his revolvers were charged, as well as his rifle, and the two laid the fierce, yelling savages about them in good style. Every shot told, as an Indian measured his length in the matted grass. Emptying his revolvers, Mat now had recourse to his shining bowie; and right manfully did he use it, as the gathering savages crowded around them. In the meantime I was not idle. I reserved the charges in my revolvers; but with my rifle contrived to pick off an Indian as fast as I could reload; the revolvers I knew, could be used to best advantage when the boys should return to the trail again, after they had filled the gourds.

"Roberts being now covered by Mat, and having emptied his revolver, again returned to his work of filling the vessels. This was soon accomplished; and Mat seeing that nothing more was to be gained, shouted—

"'We're coming, Jack; cover us well with your revolvers,—give them the blue pills—hurra!' and in another moment they had bounded up the steep pathway, and stood behind the shelter of the projecting rock.

"The Indians, astonished by the suddenness of the assault, made no attempt to follow us; and after taking a long refreshing pull at the water, Mat and I reloaded our shooting irons, and prepared for the ascent of the trail. But on turning towards Sam, who was seated by the side of the path, I saw by the dim light that now straggled into the barranca, that he had been wounded. Blood covered his face, and was flowing copiously down his shoulder and side. Then was the time, boys, he got that handsome scar across his ugly phiz. But we soon stopped the bleeding. By the time we reached the prairie above, the stars were shining in the clear, blue sky, and the deep barranca lay buried in the darkness.

"Sam Roberts, who during the recital of the story, remained a quiet listener, now broke in,—

"'But you remember, Jack, the best of that affair was the mortification of them sneaking Kioways, the next morning, when after they had passed out on the other side of the barranca, and looked over to where we had passed the night, at the head of the trail,—they saw that more than one-fourth of their number had been wiped out, by only *three of us*;—and the parting yell we sent after them, as they sneaked off, howling like so many wolves with strychnine in their maws.'

"'Yes, Sam, that was first rate,' answered the sergeant; 'but to *my* mind, about as interesting a part of that affair as any—was the moment that stream of nice, cold water was flowing out of that big gourd, down into this individual's throat.'"

AMERICANS IN ROME.

Hotel de Londres, Piazza di Spagna,
Rome, *March* 12, 1859.

Dear Bonner:—As we are indebted here in Rome to the New York Ledger for much of the literary entertainment which we get from the United States, I know not how better to acknowledge the obligation than by giving you a short report of what Americans see and do in this capital of Christendom.

Most of our people who take any interest in the arts know that we have American artists residing abroad. They have all heard of Powers, and Grenough, and Crawford. The *Beatrice Cenci* of Miss Hosmer has spread her fame throughout the Union, as the bronze doors of the Capitol at Washington, now finished in clay and in a process of casting at Munich, will with equal justice soon spread that of Randolph Rogers. Few persons, however, not themselves residents of Rome, have any idea, I presume, how extensively the Roman studios are indebted to America for occupants, and subjects, and patrons, or what a large infusion from our country gives life and beauty to the salons of Principes and Cardinals. Though resident for many years in Rome, I do not know that I could tell the names of all the American artists; but among sculptors I can recall Rogers, Miss Hosmer, Mozier, Ives and Page, while among the painters we have Rothermel, Buchanan Read, Terry, Wilson, Miss Lander, Miss Stebbins, Chapman, Nichols, Williams, Whetredge, Boggs, Freeman, Thielman, Montalant, Ropes and others. Every winter finds not less than fifty or sixty American families settled here—keeping house—entertaining and being entertained; while there is frequently a floating American population of three or four hundred persons, making, altogether,—(artists, residents and tourists)—an American "*settlement*" which would justly feel hurt if they saw themselves slighted by a journal which has such a wonderful circulation as the Ledger. From *New York* we have had here this winter Mrs. General Scott and her daughter, Mrs. Hoyt and family; Mrs. Marcy, the widow of our late Secretary of State, with Miss Marcy; Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Bronson. From *Boston*, we have as a permanently established physician Dr. Seth Winthrop Sargent, several representatives of the family of Col. Thomas Handyside Perkins: as Mr. Charles Perkins, Mr. Edward Perkins, Mrs. Cleveland, and Mrs. Doane, the wife of the well-known Bishop of that name; Mr. and Mrs. Story are now among "the oldest inhabitants;" Mrs. Thayer has recently arrived. *Baltimore* gives us Mr. P. H. Hoffman, with his wife and accomplished nieces, the Misses Nevins. *Philadelphia* sends Dr. and Mrs. Bernard Henry, and Mr. and Mrs. John William Wallace. *Newport* has lost Mr. and Mrs. George Jones, Mrs. Bruen and her family, with Governor Beach Laurence and his. Rhode Island, indeed, is particularly depleted, for we have two from Providence, Mr. and Mrs. Allen, Jr., with Mr. T. P. Ives. The literature of the country has been represented by Mr Motley and by Mr. H. P. Leland; its dramatic power by Miss Charlotte Cushman, now here since several winters, its divinity by the Reverend Mr. Hall, preacher at the American chapel here; its viniculture by Mr. Longworth, of Cincinnati; its science by Professor Beck of Cambridge, and its financial resources by Mr. T. B. Hooker, now permanently established as an American banker in this place, and one of the most successful of his countrymen in the difficult art of growing rich, while, at the same time, he is distinguished by every liberality and kind office to his countrymen.

Among the persons whom the genius of Rome brings from every quarter of the world as worshippers at her shrine, I note Mr. W. B. Reed, the ex-commissioner from the United States to the Celestial Empire, and just now come hither from the antipodes, by Bombay, Egypt, Malta and Naples. He is waiting here, I understand, to meet his successor, Mr. Ward, now on his way to China. Mr. Reed has timed things so as to be at Rome in the midst of the Carnival, which this year may be said to be a perfectly *furious* one. I saw him yesterday in the crowd on the Corso, where, regardless of any *ex*-ambassadorial dignity, they had been pelting him with confits rolled in flour, until his very neat suit of black had become as white as any miller's. He was very pleasant about it, remarking to a friend, "I don't mind it. I have been a politician for thirty years, and am quite used to being pelted." "No," said some American under a mask, who happened to overhear the conversation; "you needn't; for you can change your coat *so very* easily." Of course nothing "*Punch*"-like was intended. The carnival has this year exceeded in its gaieties any other which is remembered by this generation. Indeed, a good part of a generation has passed since there has been a carnival at Rome at all; for the two or three days allowed last year amounted to nothing, and there has been nothing else since the political disturbances of 1848. This year the whole eight days were mask days, and as fine weather prevailed throughout, the Saturnalia were characterized by as complete an *abandon* as ever prevailed in heathen Rome. The people were more drunk with delight than I ever saw people elsewhere drunk with wine. Dejeunês, dinners, suppers, tableaux, private theatricals, and every kind of fête characterized both Roman and foreign society, the American especially. A New York lady—passing a month here—assured me that she had been out three and twenty nights without interruption—Sunday, strange in the States of the Church to say, being always a gala night—and on four of these nights that she had been to either two or three entertainments! Her *tire* and fatigued features, assured me quite as much as her confessions, what a career awaits fashion and beauty when it comes to Rome in the *carnival*. The theatres, public resorts and the very streets were crowded with musicians, serenaders, dancers and maskers, in every conceivable variety of disguise and costume. The *Moccoletti* exhibition was especially splendid. You know, of course, that on the last night of the carnival, soon after dusk sets in, the whole Corso is a blaze of *candles*. All the houses,—which in this street are provided in every story with balconies,—are illuminated; not from the inside, but on the outside, by little candles stuck in the balconies, or held by persons having them in their hands. The middle of the street is filled by lines of open carriages which move along while the people in them hold their lights high as they can carry them. Indeed the coachmen stick them on the ends of their whip-stalks. The fun consists in everybody who has no candle trying to put out the candle of anybody who has one. Along the pavements the whole populace seems to be turned out; all joining in the sport. The common people will beg, borrow and steal to buy a few *moccoli* for this occasion; and on the day before this thing took place, this year, the *Monte di Pieta*, that is the great National Pawnbroking Establishment, is said to have taken 2700 pledges from people pawning articles of dress or other articles of first necessity, in order to turn out and join in the show! The Americans were not at all behind the Italians. One gentleman of Buffalo, N. Y., paid $38 for the use, during this hour, of a balcony holding three persons; I should think, however, but for this odd number, that he must have been a lover of somebody, either married or single. Indeed, in one way and another the people of Europe find that we Americans have a good deal of money—if not to keep, at least to spend. We are the most popular people in the whole world with hotel-keepers, couriers, vetturinos, post-boys and beggars; while the jewelers and modists think that the United States must be composed of Republican Demidoffs from one end of it to the other. I was not long since at *Castelani's*, famous throughout Europe for the splendor of his jewelry, and whose unrivalled taste in Greek, Roman and Etruscan settings has caused nearly all the finest diamonds of the Italian nobles to pass at different times through his hands. He showed me a necklace which had formed part of a *trousseau* of the late queen of Saxony. His price for it was $15,000. "Well," said I, "you will probably sell it to the Duchess of St. Albans, who is now here—or perhaps to Lady Spencer—the Earl has been buying a good many things here in Rome for his handsome young wife—or to the Grand-duchess Maria, of Russia—who is staying in the hotel where I am, and is said to have a million or so a year—or still more likely to the young Prince of Wales, now in town; for though he is but 17 years old, it seems that it is settled he is to marry one of the young princesses of Prussia, and of course must make her a handsome present, before long." "No," said Castelani, who had mistaken me for an Englishman, "the Americans are putting you quite to shame; all our best customers for the last few years have been from the other side of the Atlantic. We offered this necklace to Queen Christina,* but she says she is too poor. *However, before the season closes, we expect to sell it for an American present.* American husbands never deny their wives any thing they ask for." I learned afterwards that Mr. Aspinwall, of New York, had bought the pin that belonged to this splendid set of brilliants, leaving the more beautiful necklace for any lovlier bosom which American vanity and American money may be tempted still to adorn with it. The next day I strolled up the Corso to the studio of Girometri, the first cutter of pietra dura or stone cameos in Europe,—and from whom I had been commissioned to buy a pair of his most costly cameo bracelets, for a friend in St. Louis, who, having been in New York in November 1857, and being a little given to what they call here stock-jobbing—but what we elegantly style, at home, "speculation"—bought "Reading" when it was down to 0, and sold it some months afterwards when it was up to—Heaven knows what—and managed by the hocus-pocus of "*t. w. n.*," "buyers option," "short," "flat," and other science of the Exchange, to put about ninety thousand dollars into his pocket without ever taking one dollar out—had wisely concluded to put his gains out of the way of like temptation by putting a share of it on his lady's wrists. The elegant artist showed me his store—one set which appeared to be as expensive as any, had on it the name of the Principessa Cwortzniski, a Russian lady of high birth and great beauty, who has lately married the Prince of that name, whose landed possessions are among the largest in central Russia. "Well," said I, "perhaps I can't do better than to follow the Principessa. I sha'n't go *much* out of the way, anyhow." "That's a very handsome set of bracelets," said Girometri, "but I sent the same things not long since to a lady named Belmont, in New York, and I had previously sent four other sets to different parts of the United States! Perhaps for the United States you had best select some *new* patern. In the case of the Principessa it made no difference, for there are none like hers in Russia. The Russians, though liberal, don't spend like your American merchants."

I am happy to say, moreover, that a good deal of our money now finds its way to the studios of sculpture, painting and the sister art, engraving. Indeed you can go into no studio now here or in Florence, that you don't find something for "America." Steinhauser's most profitable commissions have come from the liberality of Mrs. E. S. Burd, a lady of Philadelphia, who has lately bought one piece of which the Queen of Prussia took the companion. Rainaldi—one of the few surviving scholars of Canova, and the occupant of his master's old studio—has executed one of his Amida's for Mr. Gilmor, of Baltimore, and the other for Mr. Allen, of Providence. Mrs. White and Mr. Fish, of New York; Mr. Welsh, Mr. Coleman, Mr. Fisher, and several other gentlemen of Philadelphia, have given orders of more or less magnitude in Florence, to Dupre, Bartolini, Fanlacchiotti, Powers, Hart and Galt. A few Americans have even indulged in the elegant but costly department of Florentine Mosaics—a style of Mosaic not like the Roman Mosaic at all—the pieces in which are composition—but characterized by being composed of pieces of colored marble and other hard stones. The art is understood nowhere but in Florence. In the studio of Bianchini, the most distinguished professor of the art in that place, I saw lately a beautiful table—one of the most costly made at all this season—now standing in the show room before being dispatched to Philadelphia, to which city its owner belongs. Though quite small, its cost with a pedestal of ebony, bronzed, was about $1600. A pretty one has also been lately sent to a gentleman of the Sargent family of Boston—and to other persons whose names escaped me. The great Florentine engraver, Perfetti,—the successor of Raphael Morghen in the Presidency of the Tuscan Academy,—has inscribed his lately published *Sybilla Persica*—a splendid and costly engraving—the labor of three years—to the name and memory of the late Horace Binney Wallace, known by his "Art in Scenery in Europe" and by his "Literary Criticisms," both published since his death. Perfetti styles him "a lover, judge and promoter of Art, remembered with admiration in Italy." Great interest has been excited here by the announcement of the Mount Vernon Papers, and the Duke of Wellington's letter about portraits and busts of him, though not exactly *American* literature, has afforded much amusement in a city composed chiefly of painters and sculptors, and where people do little else, I was going to say, than be painted or be 'busted.' We shall, of course, look with anxiety for your volume of American poets. I do not know into how many languages Gen. Morris's song of "Woodman, spare that tree!" has been translated. I have seen two translations in French, and one in German. It has just now been translated here into Italian by the *Abbate Ferdinando Mansi*, LL.D., one of the most eloquent and accomplished of the Roman Catholic clergy; himself a poet and a musician.

I may continue my letters from time to time; but if you find the Ledger adding another half million of subscribers to its list, I shall, of course, expect that you pass over a portion of the proceeds to the benefit of Mount Vernon. I am your Ledger-reading fellow-countryman. G. T. N.

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* Ex-Queen Christina, we suppose, now living at Rome, and said to be enormously rich,—from the confiscation—some have hinted—of church property in Spain.—Eds.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS

John H.—This correspondent appears to be a young gentleman who is proud of his moustache. That is, he *was* proud of it, when he had one. He lost it the other day in a manner which ought to be a warning to too confiding brothers. While he was lying asleep on the sofa his sister crept up softly and cut off the precious tuft. He awoke to wreak a swift and terrible revenge. Seizing his sister, he tore the scissors from her grasp, and holding her as in a vice, he severed from her lovely countenance—her beau-catchers!! When his passion subsided he began to think over what he done, and now he writes to the Ledger to know whether he has done wrong or right. Having submitted this question to several ladies and gentlemen, we find the ladies all against the act, while the gentlemen uphold and applaud it. The remark of one lady certainly has some reason in it. "A beau-catcher," she says, "is a harmless contrivance—it scratches nobody; whereas a moustache," etc., etc.

No Partizan.—The circumstances in which Henry Clay said, "I would rather be right than be President," are thus related by the friend to whom he addressed those immortal words: "On one occasion, Mr. Clay did me the honor to send for and consult with me in reference to a step he was about to take. After stating what he proposed, I suggested whether such a course would not injure his own prospects, as well as those of the Whig party in general. His reply was: 'I did not send for you to ask what might be the effect of the proposed movement on my prospects, but whether it is right; *I would rather be right than be President!*'"

School Girl.—There are a million girls in the world besides yourself who are addicted to the vice of biting their nails. When the habit is confirmed and difficult to be broken, it is generally the sign of something wrong in the system—a sluggish digestion, for example. You probably sit too many hours over your books and sewing, and are fond of eating what school girls ought not to be allowed to eat—things soft and rich. Take more exercise; eat simple food; keep your nails very smooth and even; then, resolve to bite no more; and, lastly, keep your resolution.

Lou, Moll and Kate have lovers whom they love dearly, but the gentlemen are such excessive drinkers of lager-beer that the young ladies are alarmed, and have serious thoughts of sending them about their business. Certainly, ladies; if, after knowing your feelings on the subject, it should appear that they love lager more than they love you, you cannot get rid of them too soon.

Mountaineer.—Yes, sir; there are still some thousands of men in the far west and north-west who live by hunting and trapping. Long before you get to the Rocky Mountains, you will have adventures enough to give you a keen appetite for a quiet life. But, bear in mind, that to have Kit Carson adventures you must be a Kit Carson.

A Lover of the Ledger.—No college grants degrees to students who have not resided at college—unless the degree be honorary. To ascertain the shortest term of residence required apply to the President of the College you have in your mind.

Eben.—A young lady who is engaged ought not, (and will not, if she loves her betrothed) show a *preference* for the society of other gentleman, though she is not bound to deny herself all enjoyment of their society.

J. L.—The name of the benevolent Boston merchant who died some twenty-three years since in that city, and to whom we recently alluded, was not, it seems, *Sylvanus* Cobb, but Nathaniel R. Cobb. From his early youth he was remarkable for benevolence and uprightness of character. He began business on his own account at the age of twenty-one, and with a fixed determination never to allow himself to accumulate wealth to an amount exceeding fifty thousand dollars. He also resolved to give to philanthropic enterprises and to purposes of private charity a certain per centage of his income, and of the increase of his wealth, until he should become worth $50,000, after which the entire increase should be so bestowed. This resolution he persistently and conscientiously carried out until the day of his death, which came in his thirty-sixth year. His noble life was a quiet and unostentatious one; void of pretense; shedding blessings noiselessly as the dew of heaven, not for reward, but because it was as natural for his nature thus to manifest itself as for a mountain spring to send its crystal stream murmuring through subjacent vales.

Farmer.—You are mistaken in supposing that the growth of your plants, grain, and fruit is a mere matter of accident. There is no such thing as "accident" in the processes of nature. All growth and development are governed by certain fixed and immutable laws; and the agriculturist should study to find out and master the secret of those laws, so as to reduce farming to a positive science. Much has already been done in this direction, whereby sterile tracts have been rendered productive and swamps and waste places been made to yield golden harvests.

A Paper Dealer is informed that if the talkative gentleman to whom he refers does not stop interfering in our affairs, we may be provoked into the expression of some opinions—"founded on fact," as the story writers say—not at all complimentary to him. The man who makes it his business to talk about the Ledger, must not complain if the Ledger should make it its business to refer to him, especially if it should need an example to "adorn a tale." There is one person who *ought* to appreciate our forbearance.

Rome.—It is impossible for us to pass upon the merits or demerits of the case you have presented, inasmuch as the points submitted are so few and indefinite. But we feel quite certain that you have done wrong or failed in your duty in some important respects, or it would not have been necessary for you to beat a daughter, seventeen years of age, like a dog, in order to make her obey you. We can have but very little faith in a man who has to resort to such brutality in order to govern his family.

L. M. D.—The English ancestors of Gen. Washington were of the rank of country gentlemen, and were usually persons of considerable substance. Whether or not any of the direct ancestors of the General were titled, is not known; but several members of the family were knights. There was a Sir Henry Washington in Cromwell's time who fought on the side of the king. In later days, we hear of a Sir William Washington, from a brother of whom Gen. Washington was descended.

M. E. S.—Which is right; to rule children by the rod or by persuasion? Neither. Never dishonor yourself by *persuading* a child to do what it is your right to command. "Children *obey* your parents." Children who are rightly commanded will generally obey, but if they will not, you are criminal if you do not make them. You owe it to *them* to prevent them from doing harm to themselves, which they would deplore by and by, but could not remedy.

Francisco.—A *lady* who was walking on a bad road, in or near a large city, where the heterogeneousness and wickedness of society render it necessary for the strictest rules of etiquette to be enforced, would consider it an insult for a stranger to ask her to ride with him. But in a rural vicinity, where people are all honest and good-hearted, such an offer would be courteous and proper, and could be accepted without violence to any sound, social law.

Princeton Boy.—We think if you have asked the lady's pardon for anything you may have done to offend her, that you should oblige your friend with whom she is staying by continuing to reside with him, as he so earnestly desires it, and your father has the same wish for you to remain there. It will not compromise your dignity to do it at *their* request, even should it be repugnant to your own personal feelings.

Marian.—Your mother is wise not to let you go out evenings, unless in company with your sister or brother. As to your staying at home while they go to parties, because you are too young, that, too, is best. The sooner you go into company the *older* you will appear to be, though you may number few years. Don't be uneasy to assume the responsibilities of womanhood. Fruits should not be forced into blossom before their natural time.

A Kind Husband.—Our opinion is this: When a woman consents to marry, she consents to devote her life to the rearing of children. She deliberately chooses that vocation. Marriage *means* that—was instituted for that. She should consider the matter well beforehand; but having entered into the sacred compact, she is bound to fulfil its conditions, to the best of her ability.

Countryman.—You had better go back to the country before you spend all your money. The chance for poor boys to make their fortunes in New York is about equal to what it would be for them to swim from the Battery to Jersey City. One in ten thousand might accomplish the feat, and win applause and notoriety thereby; but the rest would never be heard of, except as floating corpses.

Widower.—Notwithstanding your affected humility, there is such a strong vein of self-conceit running through your letter in regard to the attempts made by the lady in question to ensnare your affections, that we do not suppose you would take any advice unless it should confirm your *secret* intentions, and we cannot give you such an article.

Nettie.—You say that your present lover is unwilling you should retain a miniature of a deceased lover, and wish to know what you shall do. Keep the miniature and let him go. A man who has no more generosity in his nature, or who has so little confidence in you, will never make you happy.

A Smitten Heart.—If the young lady is engaged, it would not be honorable for you to try to win her affections; and even if she be "fancy free," it would not be discreet in you to win and marry a woman so much older than yourself.

Hattie.—If the young man *don't* like you, and *does* like the other young lady, leave him to his choice; there can be no compulsion in such a matter. There are plenty of young men in the world who may suit you much better.

S. P. H.—We shall commence the publication of a new story by Sylvanus Cobb, Jr., in the Ledger of next week. The scene is laid in the ancient city of Palmyra, in the age of wildest romance; and the story is one of Mr. Cobb's best.

H. E. B.—You are right. We make the Ledger so entirely unobjectionable, that when it is denounced in the hearing of one of its readers, by some person who never perused a copy of it, that reader cannot but be its defender, if the attack is worth noticing.

Selmar.—What must a lady do who is escorted to a place of amusement by a gentleman, and is left alone by him because he has found a more convenient seat for himself in another part of the room? Never go with him again; at least, not till he learns better manners.

Porto.—If your nerves are so delicate, eschew all excitement and stimulants, go to bed early, and keep as much as possible in the open air. This will do more for you than medicine.

Saxon should not take it for granted because a young lady whom he has accompanied home does not invite him in, that she is unfriendly to him. It may not be convenient to do so. *She* is the best judge of that.

Damon.—There is probably as much true friendship in the world now-a-days as there ever was, and more, too. We do not belong to the class who consider the present age as inferior to any and all of the past ages of the world.

Aliquis should not be suspicious. Modest young girls shrink from putting down their love in black and white on paper, to an absent lover. They would *say* a thousand things to you which they might not have courage to *write*.

Karl wishes to know the difference between "coquetting" and "flirting." We don't know any, unless it be that flirting is a more desperate and decided form of coquetry.

E.—When a man impertinently and persistently gazes at you, you should persistently look the other way, or any way, only so it be in such a direction as will keep your glance out of his line of vision.

Dorcas.—We think that all philanthropy is good except the "professional" kind. Be as benevolent as you please, only do not talk about it, nor make a parade of your charity.

J. B. H.—Don't encourage little flirts of sixteen to write to you without the knowledge of their parents. *It takes two to flirt*; remember that.

Yours Respectfully is informed that it is not proper or prudent for a woman to accept the attentions of a man of whom she knows nothing.

Luke Thibedeau should "dare" to do anything which is manly and proper. Declare your love in an honest way if you feel it. Women hate cowards.

Thos. E. J.—Napoleon Bonaparte, in our opinion, was not only a greater general than the Duke of Wellington, but the greatest general that ever lived.

*** *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*